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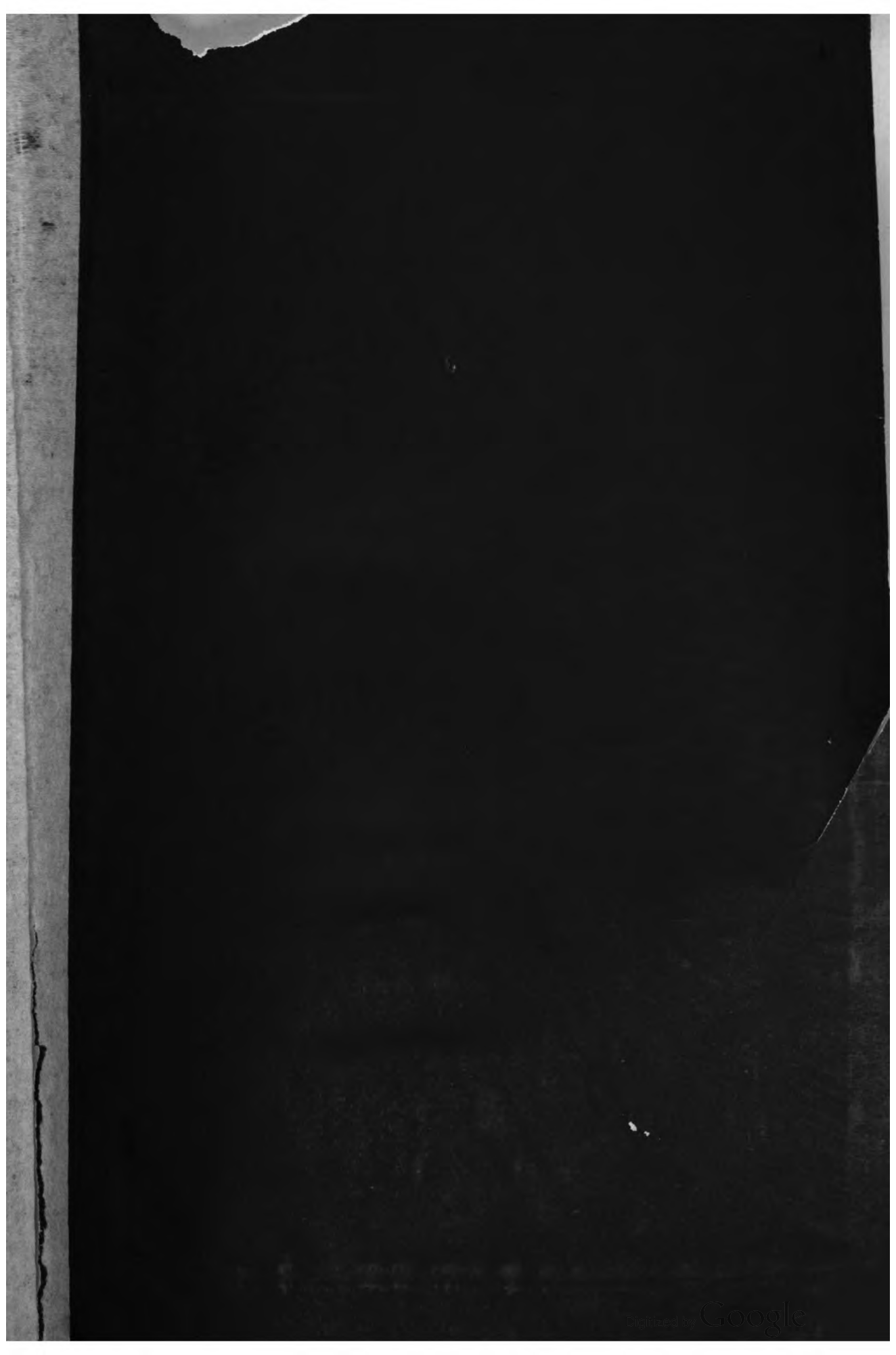
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THE

WORKS

OF

JOHN DRYDEN

ILLUSTRATED

WITH NOTES,

HISTORICAL, CRITICAL, AND EXPLANATORY,

AND

A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

BY

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

REVISED AND CORRECTED

BY

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CONTENTS

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PAGE

APPENDIX TO THE FABLES.

The Knightes Tale, by Chaucer, ... i
The Nonne Prest his Tale, ... li
The Flower and the Leaf, ... lxv
The Wyf of Bathes Tale, ... lxxx

Editor's Preface to the Translations, ... 1

TRANSLATIONS FROM OVID'S EPISTLES.

Preface, ... 7
Canace to Macareus, ... 25
Helen to Paris, ... 31
Dido to Æneas, ... 40

TRANSLATIONS FROM OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

Dedication prefixed to the Translations from Ovid's Metamorphoses, ... 51
Dedication to Lord Radcliffe (*Third Miscellany*), . . . 53
The First Book of Ovid's Metamorphoses (*Third Miscellany*), ... 69
Meleager and Atalanta (*Fables*), ... 104
Baucis and Philemon, „ 118
Iphis and Ianthe (*Third Miscellany*), ... 125
Pygmalion and the Statue (*Fables*), ... 132
Cinyras and Myrrha, „ 136
Ceyx and Alcyone, „ 149
Æsacus transformed into a Cormorant, . . . 165

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CONTENTS.

PAGE

The Twelfth Book of Ovid's Metamorphoses (*Fables*), 168
The Speeches of Ajax and Ulysses, „ 196
Acis, Polyphemus, and Galatea (*Third Miscellany*), . 215
Of the Pythagorean Philosophy (*Fables*), . . . 223

TRANSLATIONS FROM OVID'S ART OF LOVE [AND AMORES].

The First Book of Ovid's Art of Love, . . . 249
Ovid's Amours, Book I., Eleg. 1, ... 276
Ovid's Amours, Book I., Eleg. 4, ... 278
Preface on Translation, prefixed to Dryden's *Second Miscellany*, ... 281

TRANSLATIONS FROM THEOCRITUS.

Amaryllis (*First Miscellany*), ... 305
The Epithalamium of Helen and Menelaus (*Second Miscellany*), ... 310
The Despairing Lover (*Second Miscellany*), . . . 314
Daphnis and Chloris, „ 318

TRANSLATIONS FROM LUCRETIUS.

Book I. (*Second Miscellany*), ... 329
II. „ 332
III. „ 335
IV. „ 346
V. „ 356

TRANSLATIONS FROM HORACE.

The Third Ode of the First Book of Horace (*Second Miscellany*), ... 359
The Ninth Ode of the First Book (*First Miscellany*), . 362
The Twenty-ninth Ode of the First Book (*Second Miscellany*), ... 364
The Second Epode of Horace (*Second Miscellany*), . 369

TRANSLATIONS FROM HOMER.

The First Book of Homer's Iliad (*Fables*), . . . 375
The Last Parting of Hector and Andromache (*Third Miscellany*), ... 402

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APPENDIX

TO

THE FABLES.

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This Appendix contains the Original Tales of Chaucer, which Dryden has modernised. The Novels of Boccaccio are subjoined to the several Poetical English Versions.

[By the kindness of Messrs. George Bell and Sons, the text is here printed from the *Aldine* Chaucer, edited by Dr. R. Morris.—Ed.]

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THE

KNIGHTES TALE,

BY

GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

Whilom, as olde stories tellen us,
Ther was a duk that highte Theseus;
Of Athenes he was lord and governour,
And in his tyme swich a conquerour,
That gretter was ther non under the sonne.
Ful many a riche contré hadde he wonne;
That with his wisdam and his chivalrie
He conquered al the regne of Femynye,
That whilom was i-cleped Cithea;
And weddede the queen Ipolita,
And brought hire hoom with him in his contré,
With moche glorie and gret solempnité,
And eek hire yonge suster Emelye.
And thus with victorie and with melodye
Lete I this noble duk to Athenes ryde,
And al his ost, in armes him biside.
And certes, if it nere to long to heere,
I wolde han told yow fully the manere,
How wonnen was the regne of Femenye
By Theseus, and by his chivalrye;
And of the grete bataille for the nones
Bytwix Athenes and the Amazones;

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And how asegid was Ypolita,
The faire hardy quyen of Cithea;
And of the feste that was at hire weddynge,
And of the tempest at hire hoom comynge;
But al that thing I most as now forbere.
I have, God wot, a large feeld to ere,
And wayke ben the oxen in my plough,
The remenaunt of the tale is long inough;
I wol not lette eek non of al this rowte
Lat every felawe telle his tale aboute,
And lat see now who schal the soper wynne,
And ther I lafte, I wolde agayn begynne.
This duk, of whom I make mencioun,
Whan he was comen almost unto the toun,
In al his wele and in his moste pryde,
He was war, as he cast his eyghe aside,
Wher that ther kneled in the hye weye
A companye of ladies, tweye and tweye,
Ech after other, clad in clothes blake;
But such a cry and such a woo they make,
That in this world nys creature lyvynge,
That herde such another weymentynge,
And of that cry ne wolde they never stenten,
Til they the reynes of his bridel henten.
"What folk be ye that at myn hom comynge
Pertourben so my feste with cryenge?"
Quod Theseus, "have ye so gret envye
Of myn honour, that thus compleyne and crie?
Or who hath yow misboden, or offendid?
And telleth me if it may ben amendid;
And why that ye ben clad thus al in blak?"
The oldest lady of hem alle spak,
When sche had*de* swowned with a dedly chere,
That it was routhe for to seen or heere;
And seyde: "Lord, to whom Fortune hath yeven
Victorie, and as a conquerour to lyven,
Noughte greveth us youre glorie and honour;
But we beseken mercy and socour.
Have mercy on oure woo and oure distresse.
Som drope of pitee, thurgh youre gentilnesse,
Uppon us wrecchede wommen lat thou falle.
For certus, lord, ther nys noon of us alle,
That sche nath ben a duchesse or a queene;
Now be we caytifs, as it is wel seene:
Thanked be Fortune, and hire false wheel,
That noon estat assureth to ben weel.

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And certus, lord, to abiden youre presence
Here in the temple of the goddesse Clemence
We han ben waytynge al this fourtenight;
Now helpe us, lord, syn it is in thy might.
I wrecche, which that wepe and waylle thus,
Was whilom wyf to kyng Capaneus,
That starf at Thebes, cursed be that day!
And alle we that ben in this array,
And maken alle this lamentacioun!
We leften alle oure housbondes at the toun,
Whil that the sege ther aboute lay.
And yet the olde Creon, welaway!
That lord is now of Thebes the citee,
Fulfilde of ire and of iniquité,
He for despyt, and for his tyrannye,
To do the deede bodyes vilonye,
Of alle oure lordes, which that ben i-slawe,
Hath alle the bodies on an heep y-drawe,
And wol not suffren hem by noon assent
Nother to ben y-buried nor i-brent,
But maketh houndes ete hem in despite."
And with that word, withoute more respite,
They fillen gruf, and criden pitously,
"Have on us wrecched wommen som mercy,
And lat oure sorwe synken in thyn herte."
This gentil duke doun from his courser sterte
With herte pitous, whan he herde hem speke.
Him thoughte that his herte wolde breke,
Whan he seyh hem so pitous and so maat,
That whilom weren of so gret estat.
And in his armes he hem alle up hente,
And hem conforteth in ful good entente;
And swor his oth, as he was trewe knight,
He wolde do so ferforthly his might
Upon the tyraunt Creon hem to wreke,
That al the people of Grece scholde speke
How Creon was of Theseus y-served,
As he that hath his deth right wel deserved.
And right anoon, withoute eny abood
His baner he desplayeth, and forth rood
To Thebes-ward, and al his oost bysyde;
No ner Athenes wolde he go ne ryde,
Ne take his eese fully half a day,
But onward on his way that nyght he lay;
And sente anoon Ypolita the queene,
And Emelye hir yonge suster schene,

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Unto the toun of Athenes to dwelle;
And forth he ryt; ther is no more to telle.
  The reede statue of Mars with spere and targe
So schyneth in his white baner large,
That alle the feeldes gliteren up and doun;
And by his baner was born his pynoun
Of gold ful riche, in which ther was i-bete
The Minatour which that he slough in Crete.
Thus ryt this duk, thus ryt this conquerour,
And in his oost of chevalrie the flour,
Til that he cam to Thebes, and alighte
Fayre in a feeld wher as he thoughte to fighte.
But schortly for to speken of this thing,
With Creon, which that was of Thebes kyng,
He faught, and slough him manly as a knight
In pleyn bataille, and putte his folk to flight;
And by assaut he wan the cité aftur,
And rente doun bothe wal, and sparre, and raftur;
And to the ladies he restored agayn
The bones of here housbondes that were slayn,
To do exequies, as was tho the gyse.
But it were al to long for to devyse
The grete clamour and the waymentynge
Which that the ladies made at the brennynge
Of the bodyes, and the grete honour
That Theseus the noble conquerour
Doth to the ladyes, whan they from him wente.
But schortly for to telle is myn entente.
Whan that this worthy duk, this Theseus,
Hath Creon slayn, and Thebes wonne thus,
Stille in the feelde he took al night his reste,
And dide with al the contré as him leste.
  To ransake in the cas of bodyes dede
Hem for to streepe of herneys and of wede,
The pilours diden businesse and cure,
After the bataile and discomfiture.
And so byfil, that in the cas thei founde,
Thurgh girt with many a grevous blody wounde,
Two yonge knightes liggyng by and by,
Both in oon armes clad ful richely;
Of whiche two, Arcite hight that oon,
And that othur knight hight Palamon.
Nat fully quyk, ne fully deed they were,
But by here coote armure, and by here gere,
Heraudes knewe hem wel in special,
As they that weren of the blood real

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Of Thebes, and of sistren tuo i-born.
Out of the chaas the pilours han hem torn,
And han hem caried softe unto the tente
Of Theseus, and ful sone he hem sente
Tathenes, for to dwellen in prisoun
Perpetuelly, he wolde no raunceoun.
And this duk whan he hadde thus i-doon,
He took his host, and hom he ryt anoon
With laurer crowned as a conquerour;
And there he lyveth in joye and in honour
Terme of his lyf; what wolle ye wordes moo?
And in a tour, in angwische and in woo,
This Palamon, and his felawe Arcite,
For evermo, ther may no gold hem quyte.
This passeth yeer by yeer, and day by day,
Til it fel oones in a morwe of May
That Emelie, that fairer was to seene
Than is the lilie on hire stalkes grene.
And fresscher than the May with floures newe—
For with the rose colour strof hire hewe,
I not which was the *fairer* of hem two—
Er it was day, as sche was wont to do,
Sche was arisen, and al redy dight;
For May wole have no sloggardye a nyght.
The sesoun priketh every gentil herte,
And maketh him out of his sleepe sterte,
And seith, "Arys, and do thin observance."
This maked Emelye han remembrance
To do honour to May, and for to ryse.
I-clothed was sche fressh for to devyse.
Hire yolwe heer was browdid in a tresse,
Byhynde hire bak, a yerde long I gesse.
And in the gardyn at the sonne upriste
Sche walketh up and doun wher as hire liste.
Sche gadereth floures, party whyte and reede,
To make a *sotil* gerland for hire heede,
And as an aungel hevenly sche song.
The grete tour, that was so thikke and strong,
Which of the castel was the cheef dongeoun,
(Ther as this knightes weren in prisoun,
Of which I tolde yow, and telle schal)
Was evene joynyng to the gardeyn wal,
Ther as this Emely hadde hire pleyynge,
Bright was the sonne, and cleer that morwenynge,
And Palamon, this woful prisoner,
As was his wone, by leve of his gayler

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Was risen, and romed in a chambre on heigh,
In which he al the noble cité seigh,
And eek the gardeyn, ful of braunches grene,
Ther as the fresshe Emelye the scheene
Was in hire walk, and romed up and doun.
This sorweful prisoner, this Palamon,
Gooth in the chambre romyng to and fro,
And to himself compleynyng of his woo;
That he was born, ful ofte he seyd, alas!
And so byfel, by aventure or cas,
That thurgh a wyndow thikke and many a barre
Of iren greet and squar as eny sparre,
He cast his eyen upon Emelya,
And therwithal he bleynte and cryed, a!
As that he stongen were unto the herte.
And with that crye Arcite anon up sterte,
And seyde, "Cosyn myn, what eyleth the,
That art so pale and deedly for to see?
Why crydestow? who hath the doon offence?
For Goddes love, tak al in pacience
Oure prisoun, for it may non othir be;
Fortune hath yeven us this adversité.
Som wikke aspect or disposicioun
Of Saturne, by sum constellacioun,
Hath yeven us this, although we hadde it sworn;
So stood the heven whan that we were born;
We moste endure it: this is the schort and pleyn."
This Palamon answered, and seyde ageyn,
"Cosyn, for-sothe of this opynyoun
Thou hast a veyn ymaginacioun.
This prisoun causede me not for to crye.
But I was hurt right now thurgh myn yhe
Into myn herte, that wol my bane be.
The fairnesse of the lady that I see
Yonde in the gardyn romynge to and fro,
Is cause of *al* my cryying and my wo.
I not whethur sche be womman or goddesse;
But Venus is it, sothly as I gesse."
And therwithal on knees adoun he fil,
And seyde: "Venus, if it be youre wil
Yow in this gardyn thus to transfigure,
Biforn me sorwful wrecched creature,
Out of this prisoun help that we may scape.
And if so be oure destyné be schape,
By eterne word to deyen in prisoun,
Of oure lynage haveth sum compassioun,

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That is so lowe y-brought by tyrannye."
And with that word Arcite gan espye
Wher as this lady romed to and fro.
And with that sight hire beauté hurt him so,
That if that Palamon was wounded sore,
Arcite is hurt as moche as he, or more.
And with a sigh he seyde pitously:
"The freissche beauté sleeth me sodeynly
Of hir that rometh yonder in the place;
And but I have hir mercy and hir grace
That I may see hir atte leste weye,
I nam but deed; ther nys no more to seye."
This Palamon, whan he tho wordes herde,
Dispitously he loked, and answerde:
"Whether seistow in ernest or in pley?"
"Nay," quoth Arcite, "in ernest in good fey.
God helpe me so, me luste ful evele pleye."
This Palamon gan knytte his browes tweye:
"Hit nere," quod he, "to the no gret honour,
For to be fals, ne for to be traytour
To me, that am thy cosyn and thy brother.
I-swore ful deepe, and ech of us to other,
That never for to deyen in the payne,
Til that deeth departe schal us twayne,
Neyther of us in *love* to hynder other,
Ne in non other cas, my leeve brother;
But that thou schuldest trewly forther me
In every caas, and I schal forther the.
This was thyn othe, and myn eek certayn;
I wot right wel, thou darst it nat withsayn.
Thus art thou of my counseil out of doute.
And now thou woldest falsly ben aboute
To love my lady, whom I love and serve,
And evere schal, unto myn herte sterve.
Now certes, fals Arcite, thou schal not so.
I loved hir first, and tolde the my woo
As to my counseil, and to brother sworn
To forther me, as I have told biforn.
For which thou art i-bounden as a knight
To helpe me, if it lay in thi might,
Or elles art thou fals, I dar wel sayn."
This Arcite ful proudly spak agayn.
"Thou schalt," quoth he, "be rather fals than I.
But thou art fals, I telle the uttirly.
For *par amour* I loved hir first then thow.
What wolt thou sayn? thou wost not yit now

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Whether sche be a womman or goddesse.
Thyn is affeccioun of holynesse,
And myn is love, as of a creature;
For which I tolde the myn adventure
As to my cosyn, and my brother sworn.
I pose, that thou lovedest hire biforn;
Wost thou nat wel the olde clerkes sawe,
That who schal yeve a lover eny lawe,
Love is a grettere lawe, by my pan,
Then may be yeve to eny erthly man?
Therfore posityf lawe, and such decré,
Is broke alway for love in ech degree.
A man moot needes love maugre his heed.
He may nought fle it, though he schulde be deed,
Al be sche mayde, or be sche widewe or wyf.
And *eke* it is nat likly al thy lyf
To stonden in hire grace, no more schal I;
For wel thou wost thyselven verrily,
That thou and I been dampned to prisoun
Perpetuelly, us gayneth no raunsoun.
We stryve, as doth the houndes for the boon,
They foughte al day, and yit here part was noon;
Ther com a kyte, whil that they were wrothe,
And bar awey the boon bitwixe hem bothe.
And therfore at the kynges court, my brother,
Eche man for himself, ther is non other.
Love if the liste; for I love and ay schal;
And sothly, leeve brother, this is al.
Here in this prisoun moote we endure,
And every of us take his aventure."
Gret was the stryf and long bytwixe hem tweye,
If that I hadde leysir for to seye;
But to the effect. It happed on a day,
(To telle it yow as schortly as I may)
A worthy duk that highte Perotheus,
That felaw was to the duk Theseus
Syn thilke day that they were children lyte,
Was come to Athenes, his felawe to visite,
And for to pley, as he was wont to do,
For in this world he lovede noman so:
And he loved him as tendurly agayn.
So wel they loved, as olde bookes sayn,
That whan *that* oon was deed, sothly to telle,
His felawe wente and sought him doun in helle;
But of that story lyste me nought to write.
Duk Perotheus lovede wel Arcite,

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And hadde him knowe at Thebes yeer by yeer;
And fynally at requeste and prayer
Of Perotheus, withoute any raunsoun
Duk Theseus him leet out of prisoun,
Frely to go, wher him lust overal,
In such a gyse, as I you telle schal.
This was the forward, playnly to endite,
Betwixe Theseus and him Arcite:
That if so were, that Arcite were founde
Evere in his lyf, by daye or night, or stound
In eny contré of this Theseus,
And he were caught, it was acorded thus,
That with a swerd he scholde lese his heed;
Ther nas noon other remedy ne reed,
But took his leeve, and homward he him spedde;
Let him be war, his nekke lith to wedde.
How gret a sorwe suffreth now Arcite!
The deth he feleth thorugh his herte smyte;
He weepeth, weyleth, cryeth pitously;
To slen himself he wayteth pryvyly.
He seyde, "Allas the day that I was born!
Now is my prisoun werse than was biforn;
Now is me schape eternally to dwelle
Nought in purgatorie, but in helle.
Allas! that ever knewe I Perotheus!
For elles had I dweld with Theseus
I-fetered in his prisoun for evere moo.
Than had I ben in blis, and nat in woo.
Oonly the sight of hir, whom that I serve,
Though that I hir grace may nat deserve,
Wold han sufficed right ynough for me.
O dere cosyn Palamon," quod he,
"Thyn is the victoire of this aventure,
Ful blisfully in prisoun to endure;
In prisoun? nay, certes but in paradys!
Wel hath fortune y-torned the *the* dys,
That hath the sight of hir, and I the absence.
For possible is, syn thou hast hir presence,
And art a knight, a worthi and an able,
That by som cas, syn fortune is chaungable,
Thou maist to thy desir somtyme atteyne.
But I that am exiled, and bareyne
Of alle grace, and in so gret despeir,
That ther nys water, erthe, fyr, ne eyr,
Ne creature, that of hem maked is,
That may me helpe ne comfort in this.

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Wel ought I sterve in wanhope and distresse;
Farwel my lyf and al my jolynesse.
Allas! why playnen folk so in comune
Of purveance of God, or of fortune,
That yeveth him ful ofte in many a gyse
Wel better than thei can hemself devyse?
Som man desireth for to have richesse,
That cause is of his morthre or gret seeknesse.
And som man wolde out of his prisoun fayn,
That in his hous is of his mayné slayn.
Infinite harmes ben in this mateere;
We wote nevere what thing we prayen heere.
We faren as he that dronke is as a mows.
A dronke man wot wel he hath an hous,
But he not nat which the righte wey is thider,
And to a dronke man the wey is slider,
And certes in this world so faren we.
We seeken faste after felicite,
But we gon wrong ful ofte trewely.
Thus may we seyen alle, and namely I,
That wende have had a gret opinioun,
That yif I mighte skape fro prisoun,
Than had I be in joye and perfyt hele,
Ther now I am exiled fro my wele.
Syn that I may not se yow, Emelye,
I nam but deed; ther nys no remedye."
  Uppon that other syde Palomon,
Whan he wiste that Arcite was agoon,
Such sorwe maketh, that the grete tour
Resowneth of his yollyng and clamour.
The pure feteres of his schynes grete
Weren of his bitter salte teres wete.
"Allas!" quod he, "Arcita, cosyn myn,
Of al oure strif, God woot, the fruyt is thin.
Thow walkest now in Thebes at thi large,
And of my woo thou yevest litel charge.
Thou maiste, *syn* thou hast wysdom and manhede,
Assemble al the folk of oure kynrede,
And make a werre so scharpe in this cité,
That by som aventure, or by som treté,
Thou mayst hire wynne to lady and to wyf,
For whom that I moste needes leese my lyf.
For as by wey of possibilité,
Syn thou art at thi large of prisoun free,
And art a lord, gret is thin avantage,
More than is myn, that sterve here in a kage.

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For I moot weepe and weyle, whil *that* I lyve,
With al the woo that prisoun may me yyve,
And eek with peyne that love me yeveth also,
That doubleth al my *torment* and my wo."
Therwith the fuyr of jelousye upsterte
Withinne his brest, and hent him by the herte
So wodly, that lik was he to byholde
The box-tree, or the asschen deed and colde.
Tho seyde he; "O goddes cruel, that governe
This world with byndyng *of youre* word eterne,
And writen in the table of athamaunte
Youre parlement and youre eterne graunte,
What is mankynde more to yow holde
Than is a scheep, that rouketh in the folde?
For slayn is man right as another beste,
And dwelleth eek in prisoun and arreste,
And hath seknesse, and greet adversité,
And ofte tymes gilteless, pardé.
What governaunce is in youre prescience,
That gilteles tormenteth innocence?
And yet encreceth this al my penaunce,
That man is bounden to his observaunce
For Goddes sake to letten of his wille,
Ther as a beste may al his lust fulfille.
And whan a beste is deed, he ne hath no peyne;
But man after his deth moot wepe and pleyne,
Though in this world he have care and woo:
Withouten doute it may stonde so.
The answer of this I lete to divinis,
But wel I woot, that in this world gret pyne is.
Allas! I se a serpent or a theef,
That many a trewe man hath doon meschef,
Gon at his large, and wher him luste may turne.
But I moste be in prisoun thurgh Saturne,
And eek thorugh Juno, jalous and eke wood,
That hath destruyed wel neyh al the blood
Of Thebes, with his waste walles wyde.
And Venus sleeth me on that other syde
For jelousye, and fere of him Arcyte."
Now wol I stynte of Palamon a lite,
And lete him stille in his prisoun dwelle,
And of Arcita forth than wol I telle.
The somer passeth, and the nightes longe
Encrescen double wise the peynes stronge
Bothe of the lover and the prisoner.
I noot which hath the wofullere cheer.

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For schortly for to sey, this Palomon
Perpetuelly is dampned in prisoun,
In cheynes and in feteres to be deed;
And Arcite is exiled upon his heed
For evere mo as out of that contré
Ne nevere mo schal he his lady see.
Now lovyeres axe I this question,
Who hath the worse, Arcite or Palomon? 490
That on may se his lady day by day,
But in prisoun he moot dwelle alway.
That other may wher him luste ryde or go,
But seen his lady schal he never mo.
Now deemeth as you luste, ye that can,
For I wol telle forth as I bigan.
Whan that Arcite to Thebes come was,
Ful ofte a day he swelde and seyde alas!
For seen his lady schal he never mo.
And schortly to concluden al his wo, 500
So moche sorwe had*de* never creature,
That is or schal whil that the world wol dure.
His sleep, his mete, his drynk is him byraft,
That lene he wexe, and drye as eny schaft.
His eyen holwe, grisly to biholde;
His hewe falwe, and pale as asschen colde,
And solitary he was, and ever alone,
And dwellyng al the night, making his moone.
And if he herde song or instrument,
Then wolde he wepe, he mighte nought be stent; 510
So feble were his spirites, and so lowe.
And chaunged so, that no man couthe knowe
His speche nother his vois, though men it herde.
And in his gir, for al the world he ferde
Nought oonly lyke the lovers maladye
Of Hereos, but rather lik manye,
Engendrud of humour malencolyk,
Byforne in his selle fantastyk.
And schortly turned was al up-so-doun
Bothe abyt and eek disposicioun 520
Of him, this woful lovere daun Arcite.
What schulde I alway of his wo endite?
Whan he endured hadde a yeer or tuoo
In this cruel torment, *and this* peyne and woo,
At Thebes, in his contré, as I seyde,
Upon a night in sleep as he him leyde,
Him thought*e* that how the wenged god Mercurie
Byforn him stood, and bad him to be murye.

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His slepy yerd in hond he bar upright;
An hat he wered upon his heres bright.
Arrayed was this god (as he took keepe)
As he was whan that Argous took his sleep;
And seyde *him thus*: "To Athenes schalt thou wende;
Ther is the schapen of thy wo an ende."
And with that word Arcite wook and sterte.
"Now trewely how sore that me smerte."
Quod he, "to Athenes right now wol I fare;
Ne for the drede of deth schal I not spare
To see my lady, that I love and serve;
In hire presence I recche nat to sterve."
And with that word he caught a gret myrour,
And saugh that chaunged was al his colour,
And saugh his visage was in another kynde.
And right anoon it ran him into mynde,
That seththen his face was so disfigured
Of maladie the which he hath endured,
He mighte wel, if that he bar him lowe,
Lyve in Athenes evere more unknowe,
And see his lady wel neih day by day.
And right anon he chaunged his aray,
And clothed him as a pore laborer.
And al alone, save oonly a squyer,
That knew his pryvyté and al his cas,
Which was disgysed povrely as he was,
To Athenes is he go the nexte way.
And to the court he went upon a day,
And at the gate he profred his servyse,
To drugge and drawe, what-so men wolde devyse.
And schortly on this matier for to seyn,
He fel in office with a chambirleyn,
The which that dwellyng was with Emelye.
For he was wys, and couthe sone aspye
Of every servaunt, which that served here.
Wel couthe he hewe woode, and water bere,
For he was yonge and mighty for the nones,
And therto he was long and bygge of bones
To doon that eny wight can him devyse.
A yeer or two he was in this servise,
Page of the chambre of Emelye the brighte;
And Philostrate he seide that he highte.
But half so wel byloved a man as he
Ne was ther never in court of his degree.
He was so gentil of his condicioun,
That thoruhout al the court was his renoun.

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They seyde that it were a charité
That Theseus would enhaunsen his degree,
And putten him in worschipful servyse,
Ther as he might his vertu excersise.
And thus withinne a while his name spronge
Bothe of his dedes, and of goode tonge,
That Theseus hath taken him so neer
That of his chambre he made him squyer,
And yaf him gold to mayntene his degree;
And eek men brought him out of his countré
Fro yeer to yer ful pryvyly his rente;
But honestly and sleighly he it spente,
That no man wondred how that he it hadde.
And thre yeer in this wise his lyf he ladde,
And bar him so in pees and eek in werre,
Ther nas no man that Theseus hath so derre.
And in this blisse lete I now Arcite,
And speke I wole of Palomon a lyte.
In derknes and orrible and strong prisoun
This seven yeer hath seten Palomon,
Forpyned, what for woo and for destresse,
Who feleth double sorwe and hevynesse
But Palamon? that love destreyneth so,
That wood out of his witt he goth for wo;
And eek therto he is a prisoner
Perpetuelly, nat oonly for a yeer.
Who couthe ryme in Englissch propurly
His martirdam? for-sothe it am nat I;
Therfore I passe as lightly as I may.
It fel that in the seventhe yeer in May
The thridde night, (as olde bookes seyn,
That al this storie tellen more pleyn)
Were it by aventure or destené,
(As, whan a thing is schapen, it schal be,)
That soone aftur the mydnyght, Palamoun
By helpyng of a freend brak his prisoun,
And fleeth the cite fast as he may goo,
For he hade yive drinke his gayler soo
Of a clarre, maad of *a* certeyn wyn,
With nercotykes and opye of Thebes fyn,
That al that night though that men wolde him schake,
The gayler sleep, he mighte nought awake.
And thus he fleeth as fast as ever he may.
The night was schort, and faste by the day,
That needes cost he moste himselven hyde,
And til a grove ther faste besyde

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With dredful foot than stalketh Palomoun.
For schortly this was his opynyoun,
That in that grove he wolde him hyde al day,
And in the night then wolde he take his way
To Thebes-ward, his frendes for to preye
On Theseus to helpe him to werreye.
And shortelich, or he wolde lese his lyf,
Or wynnen Emelye unto his wyf.
This is theffect of his entente playn.
Now wol I torne unto Arcite agayn,
That litel wiste how nyh that was his care,
Til that fortune hath brought him in the snare.
The busy larke, messager of *day*,
Salueth in hire song the morwe gray;
And fyry Phebus ryseth up so bright,
That al the orient laugheth of the light,
And with his stremes dryeth in the greves
The silver dropes, hongyng *on* the leeves.
And Arcite, that is in the court ryal
With Theseus, his squyer principal,
Is risen, and loketh on the mery day.
And for to doon his observance to May,
Remembryng of the poynt of his desire,
He on his courser, stertyng as the fire,
Is riden into feeldes him to pleye,
Out of the court, were it a myle or tweye.
And to the grove, of which that I yow tolde,
By aventure his wey he gan to holde,
To make him a garland of the greves,
Were it of woodewynde or hawthorn leves,
And lowde he song ayens the sonne scheene:
"May, with al thyn floures and thy greene,
Welcome be thou, wel faire freissche May!
I hope that I som grene gete may."
And fro his courser, with a lusty herte,
Into the grove ful lustily he sterte,
And in a pathe he romed up and doun,
Ther by aventure this Palamoun
Was in a busche, that no man might him see.
Ful sore afered of his deth was he,
Nothing ne knew he that it was Arcite:
God wot he wolde have trowed it ful lite.
For soth is seyde, goon ful many yeres,
That feld hath eyen, and the woode hath eeres.
It is ful fair a man to bere him evene,
For al day meteth men atte unset stevene.

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Ful litel woot Arcite of his felawe,
That was so neih to herken of his sawe,
For in the busche he stynteth now ful stille.
Whan that Arcite had*de* romed al his fille,
And songen al the roundel lustily,
Into a studie he fel sodeynly,
As doth thes lovers in here queynte geeres,
Now in the croppe, now doun in the breres,
Now up, now doun, as boket in a welle.
Right as the Friday, sothly for to telle,
Now it schyneth, now it reyneth faste,
Right so gan gery Venus overcaste
The hertes of hire folk, right as hir day
Is *gerful*, right so chaungeth hire aray.
Selde is the Fryday al the wyke i-like.
Whan that Arcite hadde songe, he gan to sike,
And sette him doun withouten eny more:
"Alas!" quod he, "that day that I was bore!
How longe Juno, thurgh thy cruelté
Wiltow werreyen Thebes the citee?
Allas! i-brought is to confusioun
The blood royal of Cadme and Amphioun:
Of Cadynus, the which was the furst man
That Thebes bulde, or first the toun bygan,
And of that cité first was crowned kyng,
Of his lynage am I, and his ofspring
By verray lyne, and of his stok ryal:
And now I am so caytyf and so thral,
That he that is my mortal enemy,
I serve him as his squyer povrely.
And yet doth Juno me wel more schame,
For I dar nought byknowe myn owne name,
But ther as I was wont to hote Arcite,
How hoote I Philostrate, nought worth a myte.
Allas! thou felle Mars, allas! Juno,
Thus hath youre ire owre lynage fordo,
Save oonly me, and wrecchid Palomon,
That Theseus martyreth in prisoun.
And over al this, to slee me utterly,
Love hath his fyry dart so brennyngly
I-stykid thorugh my trewe careful herte,
That schapen was my deth erst than my scherte.
Ye slen me with youre eyhen, Emelye;
Ye ben the cause wherfore that I dye.
Of al the remenant of al myn other care
Ne sette I nought the mountaunce of a tare,

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So that I couthe do ought to youre pleasaunce."
And with that word he fel doun in a traunce
A longe tyme; and aftirward upsterte
This Palamon, that thoughte thurgh his herte
He felt a cold swerd sodeynliche glyde;
For ire he quook, he nolde no lenger abyde.
And whan that he hath herd Arcites tale,
As he were wood, with face deed and pale,
He sterte him up out of the bussches thikke,
And seyde: "Arcyte, false traitour wikke,
Now art thou hent, that lovest my lady so,
For whom that I have al this peyne and wo,
And art my blood, and to my counseil sworn,
As I ful ofte have told the heere byforn,
And hast byjaped here the duke Theseus,
And falsly chaunged hast thy name thus;
I wol be deed, or elles thou schalt dye.
Thou schalt not love my lady Emelye,
But I wil love hire oonly and no mo;
For I am Palomon thy mortal fo.
And though that I no wepen have in this place,
But out of prisoun am y-stert by grace,
I drede not that other thou schalt dye,
Or thou ne schalt not love Emelye.
Chese which thou wilt, for thou schalt not asterte."
This Arcite, with ful despitous herte,
Whan he him knew, and had his tale herde,
As fers as a lyoun pulleth out a swerde,
And seide thus: "By God that sitteth above,
Nere it that thou art sike and wood for love,
And eek that thou no wepne hast in this place,
Thou scholdest never out of this grove pace,
That thou ne schuldest deyen of myn hond.
For I defye the seurté and the bond
Which that thou seyst I have maad to the.
For, verray fool, thenk that love is fre;
And I wol love hire mawgre al thy might.
But, for thou art a gentil perfight knight,
And wenest to dereyne hire by batayle,
Have heere my trouthe, to morwe I nyl not fayle,
Withouten wityng of eny other wight,
That heer I wol be founden as a knight,
And bryngen harneys right inough for the;
And ches the best, and lef the worst for me.
And mete and drynke this night wil I bryng*e*
Inough for the, and cloth for thy beddyng*e*.

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And if so be that thou my lady wynne,
And sle me in this wood that I am inne,
Thou maist wel have thy lady as for me."
This Palomon answereth, " I graunt it the."
And thus they ben departed til a-morwe,
Whan ech of hem hadde leyd his feith to borwe.
O Cupide, out of al charité!
O regne, that wolt no felaw have with the
Ful soth is seyde, that love ne lordschipe
Wol not, his thonkes, have no felaschipe.
Wel fynden that Arcite and Palamoun.
Arcite is riden anon to the toun,
And on the morwe, or it were day light,
Ful prively two harneys hath he dight,
Bothe sufficaunt and mete to darreyne
The batayl in the feeld betwix hem tweyne.
And on his hors, alone as he was born,
He caryed al this harneys him byforn;
And in the grove, at tyme and place i-sette,
This Arcite and this Palamon ben mette.
Tho chaungen gan here colour in here face.
Right as the *honter* in the regne of Trace
That stondeth in the gappe with a spere,
Whan honted is the lyoun or the bere,
And hereth him comyng in the greves,
And breketh bothe the bowes and the leves,
And thenketh, " Here cometh my mortel enemy,
Withoute faile, he mot be deed or I;
For eyther I mot slen him at the gappe,
Or he moot slee me, if it me myshappe:"
So ferden they, in chaungyng of here hew,
As fer as eyther of hem other knew.
Ther nas no good day, ne no saluyng;
But streyt withouten wordes rehersyng,
Every of hem helpeth to armen other,
As frendly as he were his owen brother;
And thanne with here scharpe speres stronge
They foyneden ech at other wonder longe.
Tho it semede that this Palomon
In his fightyng were as a wood lyoun,
And as a cruel tygre was Arcite:
As wilde boores gonne they *to* smyte,
That frothen white as fome, *for ire* wood.
Up to the ancle they faught in here blood.
And in this wise I lete hem fightyng welle;
And forthere I wol of Theseus telle.

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The destiné, mynistre general,
That *executeth* in the world overal
The purveans, that God hath seye byforn;
So strong it is, that they the world had*de* sworn
The contrary of a thing by ye or nay,
Yet som tyme it schal falle upon a day
That falleth nought eft in a thousend yeere.
For certeynly oure appetites heere,
Be it of *werre, or* pees, other hate, or love,
Al is it reuled by the sight above.
This mene I now by mighty Theseus,
That for to honte is so desirous,
And namely the grete hert in May,
That in his bed ther daweth him no day,
That he nys clad, and redy for to ryde
With hont and horn, and houndes him byside.
For in his hontyng hath he such delyt,
That *it* is *al* his joye and appetyt
To been himself the grete hertes bane,
For after *Mars* he serveth now Dyane.
Cleer was the day, as I have told or this,
And Theseus, with alle joye and blys,
With his Ypolita, the fayre queene,
And Emelye, clothed al in greene,
On hontyng be thay riden ryally.
And to the grove, that stood ther faste by,
In which ther was an hert as men him tolde,
Duk Theseus the streyte wey hath holde.
And to the launde he rydeth him ful right,
There was the hert y-wont to have his flight
And over a brook, and so forth in his weye.
This duk wol have of him a cours or tweye
With houndes, which as him lust*e* to comaunde.
And whan this duk was come into the launde,
Under the sonne he loketh, right anon
He was war of Arcite and Palomon,
That foughten breeme, as it were boores tuo;
The brighte swerdes wente to and fro
So hidously, that with the leste strook
It seemeth as it wolde felle an ook;
But what they were, nothing yit he woot.
This duk with spores his courser he smoot,
And at a stert he was betwixt hem tuoo,
And pullid out a swerd and cride, "Hoo!
Nomore, up peyne of leesyng of your heed.
By mighty Mars, anon he schal be deed,

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That smyteth eny strook, that I may seen!
But telleth me what mestir men ye been,
That ben so hardy for to fighten heere
Withoute jugge or other officere,
As it were in a lyste really?"
This Palamon answerde hastily,
And seyde: "Sire, what nedeth wordes mo?
We han the deth deserved bothe tuo.
Tuo woful wrecches been we, and kaytyves,
That ben encombred of oure owne lyves;
And as thou art a rightful lord and juge,
Ne yeve us neyther mercy ne refuge.
And sle me first, for seynte charité;
But sle my felaw eek as wel as me.
Or sle him first; for, though thou knowe him lyte
This is thy mortal fo, this is Arcite,
That fro thy lond is banyscht on his heed,
For which he hath i-served to be deed.
For this is he that come to thi gate
And seyde, that he highte Philostrate.
Thus hath he japed the many a yer,
And thou hast maad of him thy cheef squyer.
And this is he that loveth Emelye.
For sith the day is come that I schal dye,
I make pleynly my confessioun,
That I am the woful Palamoun,
That hath thi prisoun broke wikkedly.
I am thy mortal foo, and it am I
That loveth so hoote Emely the bright,
That I wol dye present in hire sight.
Therfore I aske deeth and my juwyse;
But slee my felaw in the same wyse,
For bothe we have served to be slayn."
This worthy duk answerde anon agayn,
And seide: "This is a schort conclusioun:
Your owne mouth, by your owne confessioun,
Hath dampned you bothe, and I wil it recorde.
It needeth nought to pyne yow with the corde.
Ye schul be deed by mighty Mars the reede!"
The queen anon for verray wommanhede
Gan for to wepe, and so dede Emelye,
And alle the ladies in *the* companye.
Great pité was it, as it thought hem alle,
That evere such a chaunce schulde falle;
For gentil men thei were and of gret estate,
And nothing but for love was this debate.

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And saw here bloody woundes wyde and sore;
And alle they cryde lesse and the more,
"Have mercy, Lord, upon us wommen alle!"
And on here bare knees anoon they falle,
And wolde have kissed his bare feet right as he stood,
Til atte laste aslaked was his mood;
For pite renneth sone in gentil herte.
And though he *firste* for ire quok and sterte
He hath it al considered in a clause,
The trespas of hem bothe, and here cause:
And although his ire here gylt accuse*de*,
Yet he, in his resoun, hem bothe excuse*de*;
And thus he thought*e* that every maner man
Wol help himself in love if that he can,
And eek delyver himself out of prisoun.
And eek in his hert had*de* compassioun
Of wommen, for they wepen ever in oon;
And in his gentil hert he thought anoon,
And sothly he to himself seyde: "Fy
Upon a lord that wol have no mercy,
But be a lyoun bothe in word *and* dede,
To hem that ben in repentaunce and drede,
As wel as to a proud dispitious man,
That wol maynteyne that he first bigan.
That lord hath litel of discrecioun,
That in such caas can no divisioun;
But wayeth pride and humblenesse after oon,
And schortly, whan his ire is over-gon,
He gan to loke on hem with eyen light,
And spak these same wordes al in hight.
"The god of love, a! *benedicite*,
How mighty and how gret a lord is he!
Agayns his might ther gayneth non obstacle,
He may be cleped a god of his miracle;
For he can maken at his owen gyse
Of every herte, as him luste devyse.
Lo her is Arcite and Palomon,
That quytely were out of my prisoun,
And might have lyved in Thebes ryally,
And witen I am here mortal enemy,
And that here deth lith in my might also,
And yet hath love, maugré here eyghen tuo,
I-brought hem hider bothe for to dye.
Now loketh, is nat that an heih folye?
Who may *not* be a fole, if that he love?
Byholde for Goddes *sake* that sitteth above,

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Se how they blede! be they nought wel arrayed!
Thus hath here lord, the god of love, hem payed
Here wages and here fees for here servise.
And yet wenen they to ben *ful* wise,
That serven love, for ought that may bifalle.
But this is yette the beste game of alle,
That sche, for whom they have this jelousye,
Can hem therfore as moche thank as *jolite*.
Sche woot no more of al this hoote fare,
By God, than wot a cuckow or an hare.
But al moot ben assayed hoot or colde;
A man moot ben a fool other yong or olde;
I woot it by myself ful yore agon:
For in my tyme a servant was I on.
And sythen that I knewe of loves peyne,
And wot how sore it can a man destreyne,
As he that hath often ben caught in his lace,
I you foryeve holly this trespace,
At the request of the queen that kneleth heere,
And eek of Emely, my suster deere.
And ye schullen bothe anon unto me swere,
That never ye schullen my corowne dere,
Ne make werre on me night ne day,
But be my freendes *in* alle that ye may.
I you foryeve this trespas every dele."
And they him swore his axyng *faire and wele*,
And him of lordschip and of mercy prayde,
And he hem graunted mercy, and thus he sayde:
"To speke of real lynage and riches
Though that sche were a queen or a prynces,
Ilk of yow bothe is worthy douteles
To wedde when tyme is, but natheles
I speke as for my suster Emelye,
For whom ye have this stryf and jelousye,
Ye woot youreself sche may not wedde two
At oones, though ye faughten ever mo:
That oon of yow, or be him loth or leef,
He may go pypen in an ivy leef;
This is to say, sche may nought have bothe,
Al be ye never so jelous, ne so lothe.
For-thy I put you bothe in this degré,
That ilk of you schal have his destyné,
As him is schape, and herken in what wyse;
Lo here your ende of that I schal devyse.
My wil is this, for playn conclusioun,
Withouten eny repplicacioun,

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If that you liketh, tak it for the beste,
That every of you schal go wher him leste
Frely withouten raunsoun or daungeer;
And this day fyfty wykes, fer ne neer,
Everich of you schal bryng an hundred knightes
Armed for lystes up at alle rightes
Al redy to derayne hir by batayle.
And thus byhote I you withouten fayle
Upon my trouthe, and as I am a knight,
That whethir of yow bothe that hath might,
This is to seyn, that whethir he or thou
May with his hundred, as I spak of now,
Sle his contrary, or out of lystes dryve,
Him schal I yeve Emelye to wyve,
To whom that fortune yeveth so fair a grace.
The lyste schal I make in this place,
And God so wisly on my sowle rewe,
As I schal even juge ben and trewe.
Ye schul non othir ende with me make,
That oon of yow schal be deed or take.
And if you thinketh this is wel i-sayde,
Say youre avys, and holdeth yow apayde.
This is youre ende and youre conclusioun."
Who loketh lightly now but Palomoun?
Who spryngeth up for joye but Arcite?
Who couthe telle, or who couthe endite,
The joye that is made in this place
Whan Theseus hath don so fair a grace?
But down on knees wente every wight,
And thanked him with al here hertes miht,
And namely the Thebanes ofte sithe.
And thus with good hope and herte blithe
They taken here leve, and hom-ward they ryde
To Thebes-*ward*, with olde walles wyde.
I trow men wolde it deme necligence,
If I foryete to telle the dispence
Of Theseus, that goth so busily
To maken up the lystes rially.
And such a noble theatre as it was,
I dar wel say that in this world ther nas.
The circuite ther was a myle aboute,
Walled of stoon, and dyched al withoute.
Round was the schap, in maner of compaas,
Ful of degré, the height of sixty paas,
That whan a man was set in o degré
He lettede nought his felaw for to se.

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Est-ward ther stood a gate of marbul whit,
West-ward such another in opposit.
And schortly to conclude, such a place
Was non in erthe in so litel space.
In al the lond ther nas no craftys man,
That geometry or arsmetrike can,
Ne portreyour, ne kerver of ymages,
That Theseus ne yaf hem mete and wages
The theatre for to maken and devyse.
And for to don his right and sacrifise,
He est-ward hath upon the gate above,
In worschip of Venus, goddes of love,
Don make an auter and an oratory;
And westward in the mynde and in memory
Of Mars, he hath i-maked such another,
That coste largely of gold a fother.
And northward, in a toret on the walle,
Of alabaster whit and reed coralle
An oratory riche for to see,
In worschip of Dyane, goddes of chastité,
Hath Theseus i-wrought in noble wise.
But yit had I forgeten to devyse
The nobil kervyng, and the purtretures,
The schap, the contynaunce of the figures,
That weren in these oratories thre.
Furst in the temple of Venus thou may se
Wrought in the wal, ful pitous to byholde,
The broken slepes, and the sykes colde;
The sacred teeres, and the waymentyng;
The fuyry strokes of the desiryng,
That loves servauntz in this lyf enduren;
The othes that by her covenantz assuren.
Plesance and hope, desyr, fool-hardynesse,
Beaute and youthe, baudery and richesse,
Charmes and sorcery, lesynges and flatery,
Dispense, busynes, and jelousy,
That werud of yolo guldes a gerland,
And a cukkow sittyng on hire hand;
Festes, instrumentz, carols, and daunces,
Lust and array, and al the circumstaunces
Of love, which I rekned and reken schal,
Ech by other were peynted on the wal.
And mo than I can make of mencioun.
For sothly al the mount of Setheroun,
Ther Venus hath hir principal dwellyng,
Was schewed on the wal here portrayng

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With alle the gardyn, and al the lustynes.
Nought was foryete; the porter Ydelnes,
Ne Narcisus the fayr of yore agon,
Ne yet the foly of kyng Salomon,
Ne eek the grete strengthe of him Hercules,
Thenchauntementz of Medea and Cerces,
Ne of Turnus the hard fuyry corage,
The riche Cresus caytif in servage.
Thus may we see, that wisdom and riches,
Beauté ne sleight, strengthe ne hardynes,
Ne may with Venus holde champartye,
For as sche luste the world than may sche gye.
Lo, al this folk i-caught were in hire trace,
Til they for wo ful often sayde allas.
Sufficeth this ensample oon or tuo,
And though I couthe reken a thousend mo.
The statu of Venus, glorious for to see,
Was naked fletyng in the large see,
And fro the navel doun al covered was
With wawes grene, *and* bright as eny glas.
A citole in hire right hand hadde sche,
And on hir heed, ful semely on to see,
A rose garland ful swete and wel smellyng,
And aboven hire heed dowves *flikeryng*.
Biforn hir stood hir sone Cupido,
Upon his schuldres were wynges two;
And blynd he was, as it is often seene;
A bowe he bar and arwes fair and *kene*.
Why schuld I nought as wel telle you alle
The portraiture, that was upon the walle
Within the temple of mighty Mars the reede?
Al peynted was the wal in length and breede
Like to the estres of the grisly place,
That hight the gret tempul of Mars in Trace,
In that colde and frosty regioun,
Ther as Mars hath his sovereyn mancioun.
First on the wal was peynted a foreste,
In which ther dwellede neyther man ne beste,
With knotty knarry bareyn trees olde
Of stubbes scharpe and hidous to byholde;
In which ther ran a swymbul in a swough,
As it were a storme schulde berst every bough:
And downward on an hil under a bent,
Ther stood the tempul of Marz armypotent,
Wrought al of burned steel, of which thentre
Was long and streyt, and gastly for to see.

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And therout came a rage of suche a prise
That it maad al the gates for to rise.
The northen light in at the dore schon,
For wyndow on the walle *ne* was ther noon,
Thorugh the which men might no light discerne.
The dores wer alle ademauntz eterne,
I-clenched overthward and endelong
With iren tough; and, for to make it strong,
Every piler the tempul to susteene
Was tonne greet, of iren bright and schene.
Ther saugh I furst the derk ymaginyng
Of felony, and al the compassyng;
The cruel ire, as reed as eny gleede;
The pikepurs, and eek the pale drede;
The smyler with the knyf under his cloke;
The schipne brennyng with the blake smoke;
The tresoun of the murtherynge in the bed;
The open werres, with woundes al bi-bled;
Contek with bloody knyf, and scharp manace,
Al ful of chirkyng was that sory place.
The sleer of himself yet saugh I there,
His herte-blood hath bathed al his here;
The nayl y-dryve in the schode a-nyght;
The colde deth, with mouth gapyng upright.
Amyddes of the tempul set meschaunce,
With sory comfort and evel contynaunce.
Yet I saugh *woodnes* laughyng in *his* rage:
The hunte strangled with wilde bores corage.
The caraigne in the busche, with throte i-korve:
A thousand slayne, and not of qualme i-storve;
The tiraunt, with the pray bi force i-rafte;
The toune distroied, there was no thing lafte.
Yet saugh I brent the schippis hoppesteres;
The hunte strangled with the wilde beeres:
The sowe freten the child right in the cradel;
The cook i-skalded, for al his longe ladel.
Nought beth forgeten the infortune of Mart;
The carter over-ryden with his cart,
Under the whel ful lowe he lay adoun.
Ther wer also of Martz divisioun,
The barbour, and the bowcher, and the smyth
That forgeth scharpe swerdes on his stith.
And al above depeynted in a tour
Saw I conquest sittyng in gret honour,
With the scharpe swerd over his heed
Hangynge by a sotil twyne threed.

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Depeynted was ther the slaught of Julius,
Of grete Nero, and of Anthonius;
Al be that ilke tyme they were unborn,
Yet was here deth depeynted ther byforn,
By manasyng of Martz, right by figure,
So was it schewed right in the purtreture
As is depeynted in *the* sterres above,
Who schal be slayn or elles deed for love.
Sufficeth oon ensample in stories olde,
I may not rekene hem alle, though I wolde.
The statue of Mars upon a carte stood,
Armed, and lokede grym as he were wood;
And over his heed ther schyneth two figures
Of sterres, that been cleped in scriptures,
That oon Puella, that othur Rubius.
This god of armes was arayed thus.
A wolf ther stood byforn him at his feet
With eyen reed, and of a man he eet;
With sotyl pencel depeynted was this storie,
In redoutyng of Mars and of his glorie.
Now to the temple of Dyane the chaste
As schortly as I can I wol me haste,
To telle you al the descripcioun.
Depeynted ben the walles up and doun,
Of huntyng and of schamefast chastite.
Ther saugh I how woful Calystopé,
Whan that Dyane was agreved with here,
Was turned from a womman to a bere,
And after was sche maad the loode-sterre;
Thus was it peynted, I can say no ferre;
Hire son is eek *a sterre*, as men may see.
Ther sawgh I Dyane turned intil a tree,
I mene nought the goddes Dyane,
But Peneus doughter, the whiche hight Dane.
Ther saugh I Atheon an hert i-maked,
For vengance that he saugh Dyane al naked;
I saugh how that his houndes han him caught
And freten him, for that they knew him naught.
Yit i-peynted was a litel forthermore.
How Atthalaunce huntyde the wilde bore,
And Melyagre, and many another mo,
For which Dyane wrought hem care and woo:
Ther saugh I eek many another story,
The which me liste not drawe in to memory.
This goddess on an hert ful hy she seet,
With smale houndes *al aboute* hire feet,

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And undernethe hir feet sche had the moone,
Wexyng it was, and schulde wane soone.
In gaude greene hire statue clothed was,
With bowe in hande, and arwes in a cas.
Hir eyghen caste sche ful lowe adoun,
Ther Pluto hath his derke regioun.
A womman travailyng was hire biforn,
But for hire child so longe was unborn
Ful pitously Lucyna gan she calle,
And seyde, "Help, for thou mayst best of alle."
Wel couthe he peynte lyfly that it wrought,
With many a floren he the hewes bought.
Now been thise listes maad, and Theseus
That at his grete cost arayede thus
The temples and the theatres every del,
Whan it was don, it liked him right wel.
But stynt I wil of Theseus a lite,
And speke of Palomon and of Arcite.
The day approcheth of her attournynge,
That every schuld an hundred knightes brynge,
The batail to derreyne, as I you tolde;
And til Athenes, her covenant to holde,
Hath every of hem brought an hundred knightes
Wel armed for the werre at alle rightes.
And sikerly ther trowede many a man
That never, siththen that this world bigan,
For to speke of knighthod of her hond,
As fer as God hath maked see or lond,
Nas, of so fewe, so good a company.
For every wight that loveth chyvalry,
And wold, his thankes, have a passant name,
Hath preyed that he mighte be of that game;
And wel was him, that therto chosen was.
For if ther felle to morwe such a caas,
I knowe wel, that every lusty knight
That loveth paramours, and hath his might,
Were it in Engelond, or elleswhere,
They wold, here thankes, wilne to be there.
To fighte for a lady; *benedicite!*
It were a lusty sighte for to see.
And right so ferden they with Palomon.
With him ther wente knyghtes many oon;
Some wol ben armed in an haburgoun,
In a bright brest-plat and a gypoun;
And som wold have a peyre plates large;
And som wold have a *Pruce* scheld, or a targe;

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Som wol been armed on here legges weel,
And have an ax, and eek a mace of steel.
Ther nys no newe gyse, that it nas old.
Armed were they, as I have *you* told,
Everich after his owen opinioun.
Ther maistow se comyng with Palomoun
Ligurge himself, the grete kyng of Trace;
Blak was his berd, and manly was his face.
The cercles of his eyen in his heed
They gloweden bytwixe yolw and reed,
And lik a griffoun loked he aboute,
With kempe heres on his browes stowte;
His lymes greet, his brawnes hard and stronge,
His schuldres brood, his armes rounde and longe.
And as the gyse was in his contré,
Ful heye upon a chare of gold stood he,
With foure white boles in a trays.
In stede of cote armour in his harnays,
With nales yolwe, and bright as eny gold,
He had a bere skyn, cole-blak for old.
His lange heer y-kempt byhynd his bak,
As eny raven fether it schon for blak.
A wrethe of gold arm-gret, and huge of wight*e*,
Upon his heed, set ful of stoones bright*e*,
Of fyne rubeus and of fyn dyamauntz.
Aboute his chare wente white alauntz,
Twenty and mo, as grete as eny stere,
To hunt at the lyoun or at the bere,
And folwed him, with mosel fast i-bounde,
Colerd with golde, and torettz fyled rounde.
An hundred lordes had he in his route
Armed ful wel, with hertes stern and stoute.
With Arcita, in stories as men fynde,
The gret Emetreus, the kyng of Ynde,
Uppon a steede bay, trapped in steel,
Covered with cloth of gold dyapred wel,
Cam rydyng lyk the god of armes Mars.
His coote armour was of a cloth of Tars,
Cowched of perlys whyte, round and grete.
His sadil was of brend gold newe *i*-bete;
A mantelet upon his schuldre hangyng
Bret-ful of rubies reed, as fir sparclyng.
His crispe her lik rynges was i-ronne,
And that was yalwe, and gliterynge as the sonne.
His nose was heigh, his eyen *bright* cytryne,
His lippes rounde, his colour was sangwyn,

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A fewe freknes in his face y-spreynd,
Betwixe yolwe and somdel blak y-meynd,
And as a lyoun he his lokyng caste.
Of fyve and twenty yeer his age I caste.
His berd was wel bygonne for to sprynge;
His voys was as a trumpe thunderynge.
Upon his heed he wered *of* laurer grene
A garlond freisch and lusty for to sene.
Upon his hond he bar for his delyt
An egle tame, as eny lylie whyt.
An hundred lordes had he with him ther,
Al armed sauf here hedes in here ger,
Ful richely in alle maner thinges.
For trusteth wel, that dukes, erles, kynges,
Were gadred in this noble companye,
For love, and for encres of chivalrye.
Aboute the kyng ther ran on every part
Ful many a tame lyoun and lepart.
And in this wise this lordes alle and some
Been on the Sonday to the cité come
Aboute prime, and in the toun alight.
This Theseus, this duk, this worthy knight,
Whan he had*de* brought hem into this cité,
And ynned hem, everich at his degré
He festeth hem, and doth so gret labour
To esen hem, and do hem al honour,
That yit men wene that no mannes wyt
Of non estat that cowde amenden it.
The mynstralcye, the servyce at the feste,
The grete yiftes to the most and leste,
The riche aray of *Theseus* paleys,
Ne who sat first ne last upon the deys,
What ladies fayrest ben or best daunsynge,
Or which of hem can daunce best or synge,
Ne who most felyngly speketh of love;
What haukes sitten on the perche above,
What houndes lyen in the floor adoun:
Of al this make I now no mencioun;
But of theffect; that thinketh me the beste;
Now comth the poynt, and herkneth if you leste.
The Sonday night, or day bigan to springe,
When Palomon the larke herde synge,
Although it were nought day by houres tuo,
Yit sang the larke, and Palomon also
With holy herte, and with an heih corage
He roos, to wenden on his pilgrymage

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Unto the blisful Cithera benigne,
I mene Venus, honorable and digne.
And in hire hour he walketh forth a paas
Unto the lystes, ther hir temple was,
And doun he kneleth, and, with humble cheer
And herte sore, *he* seide as ye schal heer.
" Fairest *of faire*, o lady myn Venus,
Doughter of Jove, and spouse to Vulcanus,
Thou glader of the mount of Citheroun,
For thilke love thou haddest to Adeoun
Have pité on my bitter teeres smerte,
And tak myn humble prayer to thin herte.
Allas! I ne have no langage for to telle
Theffectes ne the tormentz of myn helle;
Myn herte may myn harmes nat bewreye;
I am so confuse, that I may not seye.
But mercy, lady bright, that knowest wel
My thought, and felest what harm that I fel,
Consider al this, and rew upon my sore,
As wisly as I schal for evermore
Enforce my might thi trewe servant to be,
And holde werre alday with chastité;
That make I myn avow, so ye me helpe.
I kepe nat of armes for to yelpe,
Ne nat I aske to morn to have victorie,
Ne renoun in this caas, ne veyne glorie
Of pris of armes, blowyng up and doun,
But I wolde have ful possessioun
Of Emelye, and dye in thi servise;
Fynd thou the maner how, and in what wyse.
I recche nat, but it may better be,
To have victorie of him, or he of me,
So that I have my lady in myn armes.
For though so be that Mars be god of armes,
And ye be Venus, the goddes of love,
Youre vertu is so gret in heven above,
Thy temple wol I worschipe evermo,
And on thin auter, wher I ryde or go,
I wol do sacrifice, and fyres beete.
And if ye wol nat so, my lady sweete,
Than pray I the, to morwe with a spere
That Arcita me thurgh the herte bere.
Thanne rekke I nat, whan I have lost my lyf,
Though that Arcite have hir to his wyf.
This is theffect and ende of my prayeere;
Yif me my love, *thou* blisful lady deere."

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Whan thorisoun was doon of Palomon,
His sacrifice he dede, and that anoon
Ful pitously, with alle circumstances,
Al telle I nat as now his observances.
But at the last the statu of Venus schook,
And made a signe, wherby that he took
That his prayer accepted was that day.
For though the signe schewed a delay,
Yet wist he wel that graunted was his boone;
And with glad herte he went him hom ful soone.
The thrid hour inequal that Palomon
Bigan to Venus temple for to goon,
Up roos the sonne, and up roos Emelye,
And to the temple of Dian gan sche hye.
Hir maydens, that sche with hir thider ladde,
Ful redily with hem the fyr they hadde,
Thencens, the clothes, and the *re*menant al
That to the sacrifice longen schal;
The hornes ful of meth, as is the gyse;
Ther lakketh nought to do here sacrifise.
Smokyng the temple, ful of clothes faire,
This Emelye with herte debonaire
Hir body wessch with watir of a welle;
But how sche dide I ne dar nat telle,
But it be eny thing in general;
And yet it were a game to here it al;
To him that meneth wel it were no charge:
But it is good a man be at his large.
Hir brighte her was kempt, untressed al;
A corone of a grene ok cerial
Upon hir heed was set ful fair and meete.
Tuo fyres on the auter gan sche beete,
And did hir thinges, as men may biholde
In Stace of Thebes and the bokes olde.
Whan kynled was the fyre, with pitous cheere
Unto Dyan sche spak, as ye may heere.
"O chaste goddes of the woodes greene,
To whom bothe heven and erthe and see is seene,
Queen of the regne of Pluto derk and lowe,
Goddes of maydenes, that myn hert has knowe
Ful many a yeer, ye woot what I desire,
As keep me fro the vengans of thilk yre,
That Atheon aboughte trewely:
Chaste goddesse, wel wost thou that I
Desire to ben a mayden al my lyf,
Ne never wol I be no love ne wyf.

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I am yit, thou wost, of thi company,
A mayden, and love huntyng and venery,
And for to walken in the woodes wylde,
And nought to ben a wyf, and be with chylde.
Nought wol I knowe the company of man.
Now helpe me, lady, sythnes ye may and kan,
For the *thre* formes that thou hast in the.
And Palomon, that hath such love to me,
And eek Arcite, that loveth me so sore,
This grace I praye the withouten more,
And sende love and pees betwix hem two;
And fro me torne awey here hertes so,
That al here hoote love, and here desire,
Al here besy torment, and al here fyre
Be queynt, or turned in another place.
And if so be thou wolt do me no grace,
Or if my destyné be schapid so,
That I schal needes have on of hem two,
So send me him that most desireth me.
Biholde, goddes of clene chastité,
The bitter teeres that on my cheekes falle.
Syn thou art mayde, and keper of us alle,
My maydenhode thou kepe and wel conserve,
And whil I lyve a mayde I wil the serve."
The fyres brenne upon the auter cleer,
Whil Emelye was *thus* in hire preyer;
But sodeinly sche saugh a sighte queynte,
For right anon on of the fyres queynte,
And quyked agayn, and after that anon
That other fyr was queynt, and al agon;
And as it queynt, it made a whistelyng,
As doth a wete brond in his brennyng.
And at the brondes end out ran anoon
As it were bloody dropes many oon;
For which so sore agast was Emelye,
That sche wel neih mad was, and gan to crie,
For sche ne wiste what it signifyede;
But oonely for feere thus sche cryede,
And wepte, that it was pité to heere.
And therewithal Dyane gan appeere,
With bow in hond, right as a hunteresse,
And seyd; "A! doughter, stynt thyn hevynesse.
Among the goddes hye it is affermed,
And by eterne word write and confermed,
Thou schalt be wedded unto oon of tho,
That have for the so moche care and wo;

But unto which of hem may I nat telle.
Farwel, for I may her no lenger dwelle.
The fyres which that on myn auter brenne
Schuln the declare, or that thou go henne,
Thyn adventure of love, and in this caas."
And with that word, the arwes in the caas
Of the goddesse clatren faste and rynge,
And forth sche went, and made a vanysschynge,
For which this Emelye astoneyd was,
And seide, "What amounteth this, allas!
I put me under thy protecciouu,
Dyane, and in thi disposicioun."
And hoom sche goth anon the nexte waye.
This is theffect, ther nys no mor to saye.
The nexte houre of Mars folwynge this,
Arcite unto the temple walkyd is,
To fyry Mars to doon his sacrifise,
With al the rightes of his payen wise.
With pitous herte and heih devocioun,
Right thus to Mars he sayd his orisoun:
"O stronge god, that in the reynes colde
Of Trace honoured and lord art thou y-holde,
And hast in every regne and every land
Of armes al the bridel in thy hand,
And hem fortunest as the luste devyse,
Accept of me my pitous sacrifise.
If so be that my youthe may deserve,
And that my might be worthi *for* to serve
Thy godhed, that I may be on of thine,
Then pray I the to rewe on my pyne,
For thilke peyne, and that hoote fuyre,
In which whilom thou brendest for desyre.
Whan that thou usedest the gret bewté
Of faire freissche Venus, that is so free,
And haddest hir in armes at thy wille;
And though the ones on a tyme mysfille,
When Vulcanus hadde caught the in his laas,
And fand the liggyng by his wyf, allaas!
For thilke sorwe that was in thin herte,
Have reuthe as wel upon my peynes smerte.
I am yong and unkonnyng, as thou wost,
And, as I trowe, with love offendid most,
That ever was eny lyves creature;
For sche, that doth me al this wo endure,
Ne rekketh never whether I synke or flete.
And wel I woot, or sche me mercy heete,

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I moot with strengthe wyn hir in the place;
And wel I wot, withouten help or grace
Of the, ne may my strengthe nought avayle.
Then help me, lord, to morn in my batayle,
For thilke fyr that whilom brende the,
As wel as this fire now brenneth me;
And do to morn that I have the victorie.
Myn be the travail, al thin be the glorie.
Thy soverein tempul wol I most honouren
Of any place, and alway most labouren
In thy plesaunce and in thy craftes stronge.
And in thy tempul I wol my baner honge,
And alle the armes of my companye,
And ever more, unto that day I dye,
Eterne fyr I wol bifore the fynde.
And eek to this avow I wol me bynde:
My berd, myn heer that hangeth longe adoun,
That never yit ne felt offensioun
Of rasour ne of schere, I wol thee yive,
And be thy trewe servaunt whiles I lyve.
Lord, have rowthe uppon my sorwes sore,
Yif me the victorie, I aske no more."
The preyer stynt of Arcita the strange,
The rynges on the tempul dore that hange,
And eek the dores, clatereden ful fast,
Of which Arcita somwhat was agast.
The fires brenden on the auter brighte,
That it gan al the tempul for to lighte;
A swote smel anon the ground upyaf,
And Arcita anon his hand up haf,
And more encens into the fyr yet caste,
With othir rightes, and than atte laste
The statu of Mars bigan his hauberk rynge,
And with that soun he herd a murmurynge
Ful lowe and dym, and sayde thus, "Victorie."
For which he yaf to Mars honour and glorie.
And thus with joye, and hope wel to fare,
Arcite anoon unto his inne is fare,
As fayn as foul is of the brighte sonne.
And right anon such stryf is bygonne
For that grauntyng, in the heven above,
Bitwixe Venus the goddes of love,
And Marcz the sterne god armypotente,
That Jupiter was busy it to stente;
Til that the pale Saturnes the colde,
That knew so many of aventures olde,

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Fond in his *olde* experiens an art,
That he ful sone hath plesyd every part.
As soth is sayd, eelde hath gret avantage,
In eelde is bothe wisdom and usage;
Men may the eelde at-renne, but nat at-rede.
Saturne anon, to stynte stryf and drede,
Al be it that it be agayns his kynde,
Of al this stryf he can remedy fynde.
" My deere doughter Venus," quod Satourne,
" My cours, that hath so wyde for to tourne,
Hath more power than woot eny man.
Myn is the drenchyng in the see so wan;
Myn is the prisoun in the derke cote;
Myn is the stranglyng and hangyng by the throte;
The murmur, and the cherles rebellyng;
The groynyng, and the pryvé enpoysonyng,
I do vengance and pleyn correctioun,
Whiles I dwelle in the signe of the lyoun.
Myn is the ruen of the hihe halles,
The fallyng of the toures and the walles
Upon the mynour or the carpenter.
I slowh Sampsoun in schakyng the piler.
And myne ben the maladies colde,
The derke tresoun, and the castes olde;
Myn lokyng is the fadir of pestilens.
Now wepe nomore, I schal do my diligence,
That Palomon, that is myn owen knight,
Schal have his lady, as thou him bihight.
Thow Marcz schal kepe his knight, yet nevertheles
Bitwixe you ther moot som tyme be pees;
Al be ye nought of oo complexioun,
That ilke day causeth such divisioun.
I am thi ayel, redy at thy wille;
Wepe thou nomore, I wol thi lust fulfille."
Now wol I stynt of the goddes above,
Of Mars, and of Venus goddes of love,
And telle you, as pleinly as I can,
The grete effecte for *which* that I bigan.
Gret was the fest in Athenus that day,
And eek that lusty sesoun of that May
Made every wight to ben in such plesaunce,
That al the Monday jousten they and daunce,
And spende hit in Venus heigh servise.
But by the cause that they schuln arise
Erly a-morwe for to see that fight,
Unto their rest wente they at nyght.

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And on the morwe whan the day gan sprynge,
Of hors and hernoys noyse and claterynge
Ther was in the oostes al aboute;
And to the paleys rood ther many a route
Of lordes, upon steede and on palfreys.
Ther mayst thou see devysyng of herneys
So uncowth and so riche wrought and wel
Of goldsmithry, of browdyng, and of steel;
The scheldes bright, testers, and trappures;
Gold-beten helmes, hauberks, and cote armures;
Lordes in paramentz on her coursers,
Knightes of retenu, and eek squyers
Rayhyng the speres, and helmes bokelyng,
Girdyng of scheeldes, with layneres lasyng;
Ther as need is, they were nothing ydel;
Ther fomen steedes, on the golden bridel
Gnawyng, and faste armurers also
With fyle and hamer prikyng to and fro;
Yemen on foote, and knaves many oon
With schorte staves, as thikke as they may goon;
Pypes, trompes, nakers, and clariounes,
That in the batail blewe bloody sownes;
The paleys ful of pepul up and doun,
Heer thre, ther ten, haldyng her questioun,
Dyvynyng of this Thebans knightes two.
Som seyden thus, som seyd it schal be so;
Som heelde with him with the blake berd,
Som with the ballyd, som with *the* thikke hered;
Som sayd he lokede grym *and* wolde fighte;
He hath a sparth of twenti pound of wighte.
Thus was the halle ful of devynynge,
Lang after that the sonne gan to springe.
The gret Theseus that of his sleep is awaked
With menstralcy and noyse that was maked,
Held yit the chambre of his paleys riche,
Til that the Thebanes knyghtes bothe i-liche
Honoured weren, and into paleys fet.
Duk Theseus was at a wyndow set,
Arayed right as he were god in trone.
The pepul preseth thider-*ward* ful sone
Him for to seen, and doon him reverence,
And eek herken his hest and his sentence.
An herowd on a skaffold made a hoo,
Til al the noyse of the pepul was i-doo;
And whan he sawh the pepul of noyse al stille,
Thus schewed he the mighty dukes wille.

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" The lord hath of his heih discrecioun
Considered, that it were destruccioun
To gentil blood, to fighten in this wise
Of mortal batail now in this emprise;
Wherfor to schapen that they schulde not dye,
He wol his firste purpos modifye.
No man therfore, up peyne of los of lyf,
No maner schot, ne pollax, ne schort knyf
Into the lystes sende, or thider brynge;
Ne schorte swerd for to stoke the *pointe* bytynge
No man ne drawe, ne bere by his side.
Ne noman schal unto his felawe ryde
But oon cours, with a scharpe *ygrounde* spere;
Feyne if him lust on foote, himself to were.
And he that is at meschief, schal be take,
And nat slayn, but be brought to the stake,
That schal be ordeyned on eyther syde;
But thider he schal by force, and ther abyde.
And if so falle, a cheventen be take
On eyther side, or elles sle his make,
No lenger schal the turneynge laste.
God spede you; goth forth and ley on faste.
With long swerd and with mace fight your fille.
Goth now your way; this is the lordes wille."
The voice of the poepul touchith heven,
So lowde cried*e* thei with *mery* steven:
" God save such a lord that is so good,
He wilneth no destruccioun of blood!"
Up goth the trompes and the melodye.
And to the lystes ryde the companye
By ordynaunce, thurgh the cité large,
Hangyng with cloth of gold, and not with sarge.
Ful lik a lord this nobul duk can ryde,
These tuo Thebanes on eyther side;
And after rood the queen, and Emelye,
And after hem of ladyes another companye,
And after hem of comunes after here degre.
And thus they passeden thurgh that cité,
And to the lystes come thei by tyme.
It nas not of the day yet fully pryme,
Whan sette was Theseus riche and hye,
Ypolita the queen and Emelye,
And other ladyes in here degrees aboute.
Unto the seetes preseth al the route;
And west-ward, thorugh the yates of Mart,
Arcite, and eek the hundred of his part,

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With baners *rede* ys entred right anoon;
And *in* that selve moment Palomon
Is, under Venus, est-ward in that place,
With baner whyt, and hardy cheer *and* face.
In al the world, to seeke up and doun,
So even without variacioun
Ther nere suche companyes tweye.
For ther nas noon so wys that cowthe seye,
That any had of other avauntage
Of worthines, ne staat, ne of visage,
So evene were they chosen for to gesse.
And in two renges faire they hem dresse.
And whan here names i-rad were everychon,
That in here nombre gile were ther noon,
Tho were the gates schitt, and cried lowde:
"Doth now your devoir, yonge knightes proude!"
The heraldz laften here prikyng up and doun;
Now ryngede the tromp and clarioun;
Ther is nomore to say, but est and west
In goth the speres *ful sadly* in arest;
Ther seen men who can juste, and who can ryde;
In goth the scharpe spore into the side.
Ther schyveren schaftes upon schuldres thyk*ke*;
He feeleth thurgh the herte-spon the prik*ke*.
Up sprengen speres on twenty foot on hight;
Out goon the swerdes as the silver bright.
The helmes thei to-hewen and to-schrede;
Out brast the blood, with stoute stremes reede,
With mighty maces the bones thay to-breste.
He thurgh the thikkest of the throng gan threste.
Ther stomblen steedes strong, and doun can falle.
He *rolleth* under foot as doth a balle.
He feyneth on his foot with a tronchoun,
And him hurteleth with his hors adoun.
He thurgh the body hurt is, and siththen take
Maugré his heed, and brought unto the stake,
As forward was, right ther he most abyde.
Another lad is on that other syde.
And som tyme doth Theseus hem to reste,
Hem to refreissche, and drinke if hem leste.
Ful ofte a-day have this Thebans twoo
Togider y-met, and wrought his felaw woo;
Unhorsed hath ech other of hem tweye.
Ther nas no tygyr in the vale of Galgopleye,
Whan that hir whelp is stole, whan it is lite,
So cruel on the hunt, as is Arcite

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For jelous hert upon this Palomon :
Ne in Belmary ther is no fel lyoun,
That hunted is, or is for hunger wood,
Ne of his prey desireth so the blood,
As Palomon to sle his foo Arcite.
This jelous strokes on here helmes byte ;
Out renneth blood on bothe here sides reede.
Som tyme an ende ther is on every dede ;
For er the sonne unto the reste wente,
The strange kyng Emetreus gan hente
This Palomon, as he faught with Arcite,
And his swerd in his fleissch *depe* did byte ;
And by the force of twenti he is take
Unyolden, and i-drawe unto the stake.
And in the rescous of this Palomon
The stronge kyng Ligurgius is born adoun ;
And kyng Emetreus for al his strengthe
Is born out of his sadel his swerdes lengthe,
So hit him Palamon er he were take ;
But al for nought, he was brought to the stake.
His hardy herte might him helpe nought ;
He most abyde whan that he was caught,
By force, and eek by composicioun.
Who sorweth now but *woful* Palomoun,
That moot nomore gon agayn to fighte ?
And whan that Theseus hadde seen that sighte,
He cryed, " Hoo ! * nomore, for it is doon !
Ne noon schal lenger unto his felaw goon.
I wol be trewe juge, and nought partye.
Arcyte of Thebes schal have Emelye,
That hath by his fortune hire i-wonne."
Anoon ther is *a* noyse *of peple* bygonne
For joye of this, so lowde and heye withalle,
It semede that the listes wolde falle.
What can now fayre Venus doon above ?
What seith sche now ? what doth this queen of love ?
But wepeth so, for wantyng of hir wille,
Til that hire teeres in the lystes fille ;
Sche seyde : " I am aschamed douteles."
Satournus seyde : " Doughter, hold thy pees.

* " If the King's Majesty say but Ho ! or give any other signal, then they who are within the lists, with the constable and marshal, throwing their lances between the appellant and defendant, so part them."—*The Ancient Method of Duels before the King.*

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Mars hath his wille, his knight hath his boone,
And by myn heed thou schalt be esed soone."
The trompes with the lowde mynstralcy,
The herawdes, that ful lowde yolle and cry,
Been in here joye for daun Arcyte.
But herkneth me, and stynteth but a lite,
Which a miracle *ther* bifel anoon.
This Arcyte fersly hath don his helm adoun,
And on his courser for to schewe his face,
He priked endlange in the large place,
Lokyng upward upon his Emelye;
And sche agayn him cast a frendly yghe,
(For wommen, as for to speke in comune,
Thay folwe alle the favour of fortune)
And was alle his in cheer, and in his herte.
Out of the ground a fyr infernal sterte,
From Pluto send, at the request of Saturne,
For which his hors for feere gan to turne,
And leep asyde, and foundred as he leep;
And or that Arcyte may take keep,
He pight him on the pomel of his heed,
That in that place he lay as he were deed,
His brest to-broken with his sadil bowe.
As blak he lay as eny col or crowe,
So was the blood y-ronne in his face.
Anon he was y-born out of the place
With herte sore, to Theseus paleys.
Tho was he corven out of his harneys,
And in a bed y-brought ful fair and blyve,
For yit he was in memory and on lyve,
And alway cryeng after Emelye.
Duk Theseus, and al his companye,
Is comen hom to Athenes his cité,
With alle blys and gret solempnité.
Al be it that this aventure was falle,
He nolde nought discomforten hem alle.
Men seyde eek, that Arcita schulde nought dye,
He schal be helyd of his maladye.
And of another thing they were as fayn,
That of hem alle ther was noon y-slayn,
Al were they sore hurt, and namely oon,
That with a spere was thirled his brest boon.
To other woundes, and to-broken armes,
Some hadde salve, and some hadde charmes,
Fermacyes of herbes, and eek save
They dronken, for they wolde here lyves have

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For which this noble duk, as he wel can,
Comforteth and honoureth every man,
And made revel al the lange night,
Unto the straunge lordes, as it was right.
Ne ther was holden to discomfytyng.
But as a justes or as a *turneying;*
For sothly ther was no discomfiture,
For fallynge is but an adventure.
Ne to be lad with fors unto the stake
Unyolden, and with twenty knightes take,
A person allone, withouten moo,
And *haried* forth by arme, foot, and too,
And eke his steede dryven forth with staves,
With footemen, bothe yemen and *eke* knaves,
It was aretted him no vylonye,
Ne no maner man held it no cowardye.
For which Theseus lowd anon leet crie,
To stynten al rancour and al envye,
The gree as wel on o syde as on other,
And every side lik, as otheres brother;
And yaf hem yiftes after here degré,
And fully heeld a feste dayes thre;
And conveyede the knightes worthily
Out of his toun a journee largely.
And hom went every man the righte way.
Ther was no more, but "Farwel, have good day!"
Of this batayl I wol no more endite,
But speke of Palomon and of Arcyte.
Swelleth the brest of Arcyte, and the sore
Encresceth at his herte more and more.
The clothred blood, for eny leche-craft,
Corrumpith, and is in his bouk i-laft,
That nother veyne blood, ne ventusyng,
Ne drynk of herbes may ben his helpyng.
The vertu expulsif, or animal,
For thilke vertu cleped natural,
Ne may the venym voyde, ne expelle.
The pypes of his lounges gan to swelle,
And every lacerte in his brest adoun
Is schent with venym and corrupcioun.
Him gayneth nother, for to get his lyf,
Vomyt up-ward, ne doun-ward laxatif;
Al is to-broken thilke regioun;
Nature hath now no dominacioun.
And certeynly wher nature wil not wirche,
Farwel phisik; go bere the man to chirche.

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This al and som, that Arcyte moste dye.
For which he sendeth after Emelye,
And Palomon, that was his cosyn deere.
Than seyd he thus, as ye schul after heere.
"Naught may the woful spirit in myn herte
Declare a poynt of my sorwes smerte
To you, my lady, that I love most;
But I byquethe the service of my gost
To you aboven every creature,
Syn that my lyf may no lenger dure.
Allas, the woo! allas, the peynes stronge,
That I for you have suffred, and so longe!
Allas, the deth! alas, myn Emelye!
Allas, departyng of our companye!
Allas, myn hertes queen! allas, my wyf!
Myn hertes lady, ender of my lyf!
What is this world? what asken men to have?
Now with his love, now in his colde grave
Allone withouten eny companye.
Farwel, my swete! farwel, myn Emelye!
And softe take me in your armes tweye,
For love of God, and herkneth what I seye.
I have heer with my cosyn Palomon
Had stryf and rancour many a day i-gon,
For love of yow, and eek for jelousie.
And Jupiter so wis my sowle gye,
To speken of a servaunt proprely,
With alle circumstaunces trewely,
That is to seyn, truthe, honour, and knighthede,
Wysdom, humblesse, astaat, and *hye* kynrede,
Fredam, and al that longeth to that art,
So Jupiter have of my soule part,
As in this world right now ne know I non
So worthy to be loved as Palomon,
That serveth you, and wol do al his lyf.
And if that ye schul ever be a wyf,
Foryet not Palomon, that gentil man."
And with that word his speche faile gan;
For fro his herte up to his brest was come
The cold of deth, that him hadde overcome.
And yet moreover in his armes twoo
The vital strength is lost, and al agoo.
Only the intellect, withouten more,
That dwelled in his herte sik and sore,
Gan fayle, when the herte felte death,
Duskyng his eyghen two, and faylede breth.

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But on his lady yit he cast his ye;
His laste word was, "Mercy, Emelye!"
His spiryt chaunged was, and wente ther,
As I cam never, I can nat tellen wher.
Therefore I stynte, I nam no dyvynistre;
Of soules fynde I not in this registre,
Ne me liste nat thopynyouns to telle
Of hem, though that thei wyten wher they dwelle.
Arcyte is cold, *lat* Mars his soule gye;
Now wol I speke forth of Emelye.
Shright Emely, and howlede Palomon,
And Theseus his sustir took anon
Swownyng, and bar hir fro the corps away.
What helpeth it to tarye forth the day,
To telle how sche weep bothe eve and morwe?
For in swich caas wommen can have such sorwe,
Whan that here housbonds ben from hem ago,
That for the more part they sorwen so,
Or elles fallen in such maladye,
That atte laste certeynly they dye.
Infynyt been the sorwes and the teeres
Of olde folk, *and folk* of tendre yeeres;
So gret a wepyng was ther noon certayn,
Whan Ector was i-brought, al freissh i-slayn,
As that ther was for deth of this Theban;
For sorwe of him ther weepeth bothe child and man
At Troye, allas! the pité that was there,
Cracchyng of cheekes, rending eek of here.
"Why woldist thou be deed," this wommen crye,
"And haddest gold ynowgh, and Emelye?"
No man mighte glade Theseus,
Savyng his olde fader Egeus,
That knew this worldes transmutacioun,
As he hadde seen it torne up and doun,
Joye after woo, and woo aftir gladnesse:
And schewed him ensample and likenesse.
"Right as ther deyde never man," quod he,
"That he ne lyved in erthe in som degree,
Yit ther ne lyvede never man," he seyde,
"In al this world, that som tyme he ne deyde.
This world nys but a thurghfare ful of woo,
And we ben pilgryms, passyng to and froo;
Deth is an ende of every worldly sore."
And over al this yit seide he mochil more
To this effect, ful wysly to enhorte
The peple, that *they* schulde him recomforte.

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Duk Theseus, with al his busy cure,
Cast busyly wher that the sepulture
Of good Arcyte may best y-maked be,
And eek most honurable in his degré.
And atte last he took conclusioun,
That ther as first Arcite and Palomon
Hadden for love the batail hem bytwene,
That in the selve grove, soote and greene,
Ther as he hadde his amorous desires,
His compleynt, and for love his hoote fyres,
He wolde make a fyr, in which thoffice
Funeral he might *hem* al accomplice;
And leet comaunde anon to hakke and hewe
The okes old, and lay hem on a rewe
In culpouns wel arrayed for to brenne.
His officers with swifte foot they renne,
And ryde anon at his comaundement.
And after this, Theseus hath i-sent
After a beer, and it al overspradde
With cloth of golde, the richest that he hadde.
And of the same sute he clad Arcyte;
Upon his hondes were his gloves whyte;
Eke on his heed a croune of laurer grene;
And in his hond a swerd ful bright and kene.
He leyde him bare the visage on the beere,
Therwith he weep that pité was to heere.
And for the poeple schulde see him alle,
Whan it was day he brought hem to the halle,
That roreth of the cry and of the soun.
Tho cam this woful Theban Palomoun,
With flotery berd, and ruggy asshy heeres,
In clothis blak, y-dropped al with teeres,
And, passyng other, of wepyng Emelye,
The rewfullest of al the companye.
In as moche as the service schulde be
The more nobul and riche in his degré,
Duk Theseus leet forth thre steedes brynge,
That trapped were in steel al gliterynge,
And covered with armes of dan Arcyte.
Upon the steedes, that weren grete and white,
Ther seeten folk, of which oon bar his scheeld,
Another his spere up in his hondes heeld;
The thridde bar with him his bowe Turkeys,
Of brend gold was the caas and eek the herneys;
And riden forth a paas with sorwful chere
Toward the grove, as ye schul after heere.

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The nobles of the Grekes that ther were
Upon here schuldres carieden the beere,
With slak paas, and eyhen reed and wete,
Thurghout the cité, by the maister streete,
That sprad was al with blak, and wonder hye
Right of the same is al the stret i-wrye.
Upon the right hond went olde Egeus,
And on that other syde duk Theseus,
With vessels in here hand of gold wel fyn,
As ful of hony, mylk, and blood, and wyn;
Eke Palomon, with a gret companye;
And after that com woful Emelye,
With fyr in hond, as was that time the gyse,
To do thoffice of funeral servise.
Heygh labour, and ful gret apparailyng
Was at the service and at the fyr makyng,
That with his grene top the heven raughte,
And twenty fadme of brede tharme straughte;
This is to seyn, the boowes were so brode.
Of stree first was ther leyd ful many a loode.
But how the fyr was makyd up on highte,
And eek the names how the trees highte,
As ook, fyr, birch, asp, aldir, holm, popler,
Wilw, elm, plane, assch, box, chesteyn, lynde, laurer,
Mapul, thorn, beech, hasil, ew, wyppyltre,
How they weren felde, schal nought be told for me;
Ne how the goddes ronnen up and doun,
Disheryt of here habitacioun,
In which they whilom woned in rest and pees,
Nymphes, Faunes, and Amadryes;
Ne how the beestes and the briddes alle
Fledden for feere, whan the woode was falle;
Ne how the ground agast was of the light,
That was nought wont to see no sonne bright;
Ne how the fyr was couchid first with stree,
And thanne with drye stykkes cloven in three,
And thanne with grene woode and spicerie,
And thanne with cloth of gold and with perrye,
And gerlandes hangyng with ful many a flour,
The myrre, thensens with also *swe*t odour;
Ne how Arcyte lay among al this,
Ne what richesse aboute his body is;
Ne how that Emely, as was the gyse,
Putt in the fyr of funeral servise;
Ne how she swownede when sche made the fyre,
Ne what sche spak, ne what was hire desire;

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Ne what jewels men in the fyr tho caste,
Whan that the fyr was gret and brente faste;
Ne how sum caste hir scheeld, and summe her spere,
And of here vestimentz, which that they were,
And cuppes ful of wyn, and mylk, and blood,
Unto the fyr, that brent as it were wood;
Ne how the *Grekes* with an huge route
Thre tymes ryden al the fyr aboute
Upon the lefte hond, with an heih schoutyng,
And thries with here speres clateryng;
And thries how the ladyes gan to crye;
Ne how that lad was home-ward Emelye;
Ne how Arcyte is brent to aschen colde;
Ne howe that liche-wake was y-holde
Al thilke night, ne how the Grekes pleye
The wake-pleyes, kepe I nat to seye;
Who wrastleth best naked, with oyle enoynt,
Ne who that bar him best in no disjoynt.
I wol not telle eek how that they ben goon
Hom til Athenes whan the pley is doon.
But schortly to the poynt now wol I wende,
And maken of my longe tale an ende.
  By proces and by lengthe of certeyn yeres
Al styntyd is the mornyng and the teeres
Of alle Grekys, by oon general assent.
Than semede me ther was a parlement
At Athenes, on a certeyn poynt and cas;
Among the whiche poyntes spoken was
To han with certeyn contrees alliaunce,
And have fully of Thebans obeissance.
For which this noble Theseus anon
Let senden after gentil Palomon,
Unwist of him what was the cause and why;
But in his blake clothes sorwfully
He cam at his comaundement in hye.
Tho sente Theseus for Emelye.
Whan they were sette, and hussht was al the place,
And Theseus abyden hadde a space
Or eny word cam fro his wyse brest,
His eyen set he ther as was his lest,
And with a sad visage he sykede stille,
And after that right thus he seide his wille.
  "The firste moevere of the cause above,
Whan he first made the fayre cheyne of love,
Gret was theffect, and heigh was his entente;
Wel wist he why, and what therof he mente;

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For with that faire cheyne of love he bond
The fyr, the watir, the eyr, and eek the lond
In certeyn boundes, that they may not flée;
That same prynce and moevere eek," quod he,
" Hath stabled, in this wrecched world adoun,
Certeyn dayes and duracioun
To alle that er engendrid in this place,
Over the *whiche* day they may nat pace,
Al mowe they yit wel here dayes abregge;
Ther needeth non auctorité tallegge;
For it is preved by experience,
But that me luste declare my sentence.
Than may men wel by this ordre discerne,
That thilke moevere stabul is and eterne.
Wel may men knowe, but it be a fool,
That every partye dyryveth from his hool.
For nature hath nat take his bygynnyng
Of no partye ne cantel of a thing,
But of a thing that parfyt is and stable,
Descendyng so, til it be corumpable.
And therfore of his wyse purveaunce
He hath so wel biset his ordenaunce,
That spices of thinges and progressiouns
Schullen endure by successiouns,
And nat eterne be withoute *any* lye:
This maistow understand and se at ye.
" Lo the ook, that hath so long norisschynge
Fro tyme that it gynneth first to springe,
And hath so long a lyf, as we may see,
Yet atte laste wasted is the tree.
" Considereth eek, how that the harde stoon
Under oure foot, on which we trede and goon,
Yit wasteth it, as it lith by the weye.
The brode ryver som tyme wexeth dreye.
The grete townes see we wane and wende.
Then may I see that al thing hath an ende.
" Of man and womman se we wel also,
That wendeth in oon of this termes two,
That is to seyn, in youthe or elles in age,
He moot ben deed, the kyng as schal a page;
Sum in his bed, som in the deepe see,
Som in the large feeld, as men may se.
Ther helpeth naught, al goth thilke weye.
Thanne may I seie wel that al thing schal deye.
What maketh this but Jubiter the kyng?
The which is prynce and cause of alle thing;

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Convertyng al unto his propre wille,
From which he is dereyned, soth to telle.
And here agayn no creature of lyve
Of no degré avayleth for to stryve.
"Than is it wisdom, as thenketh me,
To maken vertu of necessité,
And take it wel, that we may nat eschewe,
And namely that that to us alle is dewe.
And who-so gruccheth aught, he doth folye,
And rebel is to him that al may gye.
And certeynly a man hath most honour
To deyen in his excellence and flour,
Whan he is siker of his goode name.
Than hath he doon his freend, ne him, no schame,
And glader ought his freend ben of his deth,
Whan with honour is yolden up the breth,
Thanne whan his name appalled is for age;
For al forgeten is his vasselage.
Thanne is it best, as for a worthi fame,
To dye whan a man is best of name.
The contrary of al this is wilfulnesse.
Why grucchen we? why have we hevynesse,
That good Arcyte, of chyvalry the flour,
Departed is, with worschip and honour
Out of this foule prisoun of this lyf?
Why gruccheth heer his cosyn and his wyf
Of his welfare, that loven him so wel?
Can he hem thank? nay, God woot, never a del,
That bothe his soule and eek hemself offende,
And yet they may here lustes nat amende.
"What may I conclude of this longe serye,
But aftir wo I rede us to be merye,
And thanke Jubiter of al his grace?
And or that we departe fro this place,
I rede that we make, of sorwes two,
O parfyt joye lastyng ever mo:
And loketh now wher most sorwe is her-inne,
Ther wol we first amenden and bygynne.
"Sustyr," quod he, "this is my ful assent,
With al thavys heer of my parlement,
That gentil Palomon, your owne knight,
That serveth yow with herte, wil, and might,
And ever hath doon, syn fyrst tyme ye him knewe,
That ye schul of your grace upon him rewe,
And take him for your housbond and for lord:
Lene me youre hand, for this is oure acord.

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Let see now of your wommanly pité.
He is a kynges brothir sone, pardee;
And though he were a pore bachiller,
Syn he hath served you so many a yeer,
And had for you so gret adversité,
Hit moste be considered, trusteth me.
For gentil mercy aughte *to* passe right."
Than seyde he thus to Palomon ful right;
"I trowe ther needeth litel sermonyng
To make you assente to this thing.
Com neer, and tak your lady by the hond."
Betwix hem was i-maad anon the bond,
That highte matrimoyn or mariage,
By alle the counseil of the baronage.
And thus with blys and eek with melodye
Hath Palomon i-wedded Emelye.
And God, that al this wyde world hath wrought,
Send him his love, that hath it deere i-bought.
For now is Palomon in al his wele,
Lyvynge in blisse, richesse, and in hele,
And Emely him loveth so tendirly,
And he hir serveth al so gentilly,
That never *was ther* wordes hem bitweene
Of gelousy, ne of non othir teene.
Thus endeth Palomon and Emelye;
And God save al this fayre companye! Amen!

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THE

NONNE PREST HIS TALE.

A PORE wydow, somdel stope in age,
Was whilom duellyng in a pore cotage,
Bisyde a grove, stondyng in a dale.
This wydowe, of which I telle yow my tale,
Syn thilke day that sche was last a wif,
In paciens ladde a ful symple lyf.
For litel was hir catel and hir rente;
For housbondry of such as God hir sente,
Sche fond hirself, and eek hir doughtres tuo.
Thre large sowes hadde sche, and no mo,
Thre kyn, and eek a scheep that highte Malle.
Ful sooty was hir bour, and eek hir halle,
In which she eet ful many a sclender meel.
Of poynaunt saws hir needide never a deel.
Noon deynteth morsel passide thorugh hir throte;
Hir dyete was accordant to hir cote.
Repleccioun ne made hir never sik;
Attempre dyete was al hir phisik,
And exercise, and hertes suffisaunce.
The goute lette hir nothing for to daunce,
The apoplexie *ne* schente not hir heed;
No wyn ne drank sche, nother whit ne reed;
Hir bord *was* servyd *most* with whit and blak,
Milk and broun bred, in which sche fond no lak,
Saynd bacoun, and som tyme an ey or tweye;
For sche was as it were a maner deye.
A yerd sche had, enclosed al aboute
With stikkes, and a drye dich withoute,

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In which she had a cok, hight Chaunteclere,
In al the lond of crowyng was noon his peere.
His vois was merier than the mery orgon,
On masse dayes that in the chirche goon;
Wel sikerer was his crowyng in his logge,
Than is a clok, or an abbay orologge.
By nature knew he ech ascensioun
Of equinoxial in thilke toun;
For whan degrees fyftene were ascendid,
Thanne crew he, it mighte not ben amendid.
His comb was redder than the fyne coral,
And batayld, as it were a castel wal.
His bile was blak, and as the geet it schon;
Lik asur were his legges, and his ton;
His nayles whitter than the lily flour,
And lik the burnischt gold was his colour.
This gentil cok had in his governaunce
Seven hennes, for to do al his plesaunce,
Whiche were his sustres and his paramoures,
And wonder lik to him, as of coloures.
Of whiche the fairest hiewed on hir throte,
Was cleped fayre damysel Pertilote.
Curteys sche was, discret, and debonaire,
And companable, and bar hirself ful faire,
Syn thilke day that sche was seven *nyght* old,
That sche hath trewely the hert in hold
Of Chaunteclere loken in every lith;
He loved hir so, that wel him was therwith.
But such a joye was it to here him synge,
Whan that the brighte sonne gan to springe,
In swete acord, "my liefe is faren on londe."
Fro thilke tyme, as I have understonde,
Bestis and briddes cowde speke and synge.
And so byfel, that in a dawenynge,
As Chaunteclere among his wyves alle
Sat on his perche, that was in *the* halle,
And next him sat this faire Pertelote,
This Chauntecler gan gronen in his throte,
As man that in his dreem is drecched sore.
And whan that Pertelot thus herd him rore,
Sche was agast, and sayde, "herte deere,
What eylith yow to grone in this manere?
Ye ben a verray sleper, fy for schame!"
And he answerd and sayde thus, "Madame,
I pray yow, that ye take it nought agreef:
By God, me mette I was in such meschief

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Right now, that yit myn hert is sore afright.
Now God," quod he, "my sweven rede aright,
And keep my body out of foul prisoun!
Me mette, how that I romed up and doun
Withinne oure yerd, wher as I saugh a beest,
Was lik an hound, and wold have maad arrest
Upon my body, and wold han had me deed.
His colour was bitwixe yolow and reed;
And tipped was his tail, and bothe his eeres
With blak, unlik the remenaunt of his heres.
His snowt was smal, with glowynge eyen tweye;
Yet of his look for fer almost I deye;
This causede me my gronyng douteles."
"Away!" quod sche, "fy on yow, herteles!
Allas!" quod sche, "for, by that God above!
Now have ye lost myn hert and al my love;
I can nought love a coward, by my feith.
For certis, what so ony womman seith,
We alle desiren, if it mighte be,
To have housbondes, hardy, riche, and fre,
And secré, and no nygard, ne no fool,
Ne him that is agast of every tool,
Ne noon avaunter, by that God above!
How dorst ye sayn for schame unto your love,
That any thing mighte make yow afferd?
Have ye no mannes hert, and han a berd?"
Allas! and canne ye ben agast of swevenys?
Nought, God wot, but vanité, in sweven is.
Swevens engendrid ben of repleccions,
And often of fume, and of complexions,
Whan humours ben to abundaunt in a wight.
Certes this dreem, which ye han met to-night,
Cometh of the grete superfluité
Of youre reede *colera*, pardé,
Which causeth folk to dremen in here dremes
Of arwes, and of fuyr with reede beemes,
Of rede bestis, that thai wil him byte,
Of contek, and of whelpis greet and lite;
Right as the humour of malencolie
Causeth, in sleep, ful many a man to crye,
For fere of beres, or of boles blake,
Or elles blake develes wol him take.
Of other humours couthe I telle also,
That wirken many a man in slep ful woo;
But I wol passe as lightly as I can.
Lo Catoun, which that was so wis a man,

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Sayde he nought thus, ne do no force of dremes?
Now, sire," quod sche, "whan we fle fro thise beemes,
For Goddis love, as tak som laxatyf;
Up peril of my soule, and of my lyf,
I counsel yow the best, I wol not lye,
That bothe of coloure, and of malencolye
Ye purge yowe; and for ye schol nouht tarye,
Though in this toun is noon apotecarie,
I schal myself tuo herbes techyn yow,
That schal be for your hele, and for youre prow;
And in oure yerd tho herbes schal I fynde,
The whiche han of her propreté by kynde
To purgen yow bynethe, and eek above.
Forget not this, for Goddis oughne love!
Ye ben ful colerik of complexioun.
Ware the sonne in his ascencioun
Ne fynd yow not replet in humours hote;
And if it do, I dar wel lay a grote,
That ye schul have a fever terciane,
Or elles an agu, that may be youre bane.
A day or tuo ye schul have digestives
Of wormes, er ye take your laxatives,
Of lauriol, century, and fumytere,
Or elles of elder bery, that growith there,
Of catapus, or of gaytres beriis,
Of erbe yve growinge in our yerd, ther mery is;
Pike hem up right as thay growe, and et hem in.
Be mery, housbond, for your fader kyn!
Dredith non dremes; I can saye no more."
"Madame," quod he, "*graunt mercy* of your lore.
But natheles, as touching daun Catoun,
That hath of wisdom such a gret renoun,
Though that he bad no dremes for to drede,
By God, men may in olde bookes rede
Of many a man, more of auctorité
That ever Catoun was, so mot I the,
That al the revers sayn of his sentence,
And han wel founden by experience,
That dremes ben significaciouns,
As wel of joye, as of tribulaciouns,
That folk enduren in this lif present.
Ther nedeth make of this noon argument;
The verray preve schewith it in dede.
Oon of the grettest auctours that men rede,
Saith thus, that whilom tway felawes wente
On pylgrimage in a ful good entente;

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And happede so, thay come into a toun,
Wher as ther was such congregacioun
Of people, and eek so streyt of herbergage,
That thay fonde nought as moche as oon cotage
In which that thay mighte bothe i-logged be.
Wherfor thay mosten of necessité.
As for that night, depart her compaignye;
And ech of hem goth to his hostelrye,
And took his loggyng as it wolde falle.
That oon of hem was loggid in a stalle,
Fer in a yerd, with oxen of the plough;
That other man was logged wel ynough,
As was his adventure, or *his* fortune,
That us governith alle in comune.
And so bifel, that, long er it were day,
This oon met in his bed, ther as he lay,
How that his felaw gan upon him calle,
And sayd, "allas! for in an oxe stalle
This night I schal be murdrid ther I lye.
Now help me, deere brother, or I dye;
In alle *haste* cum to me," he sayde.
This man out of his slep for fer abrayde;
But whan that he was waked out of his sleep
He torned him, and took of this no keep
Him thought his dreem nas but a vanité.
Thus twies in his sleepe dremed he.
And at the thridde time yet his felawe
Com, as him thought, and sayd, "I am now slawe;
Bihold my bloody woundes, deep and wyde!
Arise up erly in the morwe tyde,
And at the west gate of the toun," quod he,
"A cart *ful* of donge there schalt thou see,
In which my body is hyd *ful* prively;
Do thilke cart arresten boldely.
My golde causede my mourdre, soth to sayn."
And told him every poynt how he was slayn,
With a ful pitous face, pale of hewe.
And truste wel, his dreem he fond ful trewe:
For on the morwe, as sone as it was day,
To his felawes in he took the way;
And whan that he cam to this oxe stalle,
After his felaw he bigan to calle.
The hostiller answered him anoon,
And sayde, "Sire, your felaw is agoon,
Als soone as day he went out of the toun."
This man gan falle in a suspeccioun,

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Remembring on his dremes that he mette,
And forth he goth, no lenger wold he lette,
Unto the west gate of the toun, and fond
A dong cart as it wente to donge lond,
That was arrayed in the same wise
As ye han herd the deede man devise;
And with an hardy hert he gan to crie
Vengeaunce and justice of this felonye.
"My felaw mordrid is this same night,
And in this carte he lith *gapeinge* upright.
I crye out on the ministres," quod he,
"That schulde kepe and reule this cite;
Harrow! allas! her lith my felaw slayn!"
What schold I more unto this tale sayn?
The peple upstert, and caste the cart to grounde,
And in the myddes of the dong thay founde
The dede man, that mordred was al newe.
O blisful God, thou art ful just and trewe!
Lo, how thow bywreyest mordre alday!
Mordre wil out, certes it is no nay.
Murder is so wlatsom and abhominable
To God, that is so just and resonable,
That he ne wolde nought suffre it hiled be;
Though it abyde a yeer, or tuo, or thre,
Morder wil out, this is my conclusioun.
And right anoon, the mynistres of that toun
Han hent the carter, and so sore him pyned,
And eek the hostiller so sore engyned,
That thay biknew her wikkednes anoon,
And were anhonged by the nekke boon.
"Here may men se that dremys ben to drede.
And certes in the same book I rede,
Right in the nexte chapitre after this,
(I gabbe nought, so have I joye or bliss),
Tuo men that wolde have passed over see
For certeyn causes into fer contré,
If that the wynd ne hadde ben contrarie,
That made hem in a cité for to tarie,
That stood ful mery upon an haven syde.
But on a day, agayn the even tyde,
The wynd gan chaunge, and blew right as hem lest.
Jolyf and glad they wenten unto rest,
And casten hem ful erly for to sayle;
But to that oon man fel a gret mervayle.
That oon of hem in his slepyng as he lay,
Him met a wonder drem, agayn the day;

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Him thought a man stood by his beddes syde,
And him comaunde*de*, that he schuld abyde,
And sayd him thus, " If thou to morwe wende,
Thow schalt be dreynt; my tale is at an ende."
He wook, and told his felaw what he mette,
And pray*ede* him his viage for to lette;
As for that day, he prayd him to abyde.
His felaw that lay by his beddis syde,
Gan for to lawgh, and scorned him ful fast.
" No dreem," quod he, " may so myn herte gaste,
That I wil lette for to do my thinges.
I sette not a straw by thy dremynges,
For swevens been but vanitees and japes.
Men dreme al day of owles and of apes,
And eke of many a mase therwithal;
Men dreme of thinges that never *was*, *ne* schal.
But sith I see that thou wilt her abyde,
And thus forslouthe wilfully thy tyde,
God wot it reweth me, and have good day."
And thus he took his leve, and went his way.
But er he hadde half his cours i-sayled,
Noot I nought why, ne what meschaunce it ayled,
But casuelly the schippes bothom rent*e*,
And schip and man under the watir went*e*
In sight of other schippes ther byside,
That with him sailed at the same tyde.
" And therfore, faire Pertelot so deere,
By such ensamples olde maistow leere
That no man scholde be so recheles
Of dremes, for I say the douteles,
That many a dreem ful sore is for to drede.
Lo, in the lif of seint Kenelm, I rede,
That was Kenulphus sone, that noble king
Or Merc*in*rike, how Kenilm mette a thing.
A litil, *or* he was mordred, upon a day
His mordre in his avysioun he say.
His norice him expouned every del
His sweven, and bad him for to kepe him wel
Fro traisoun; but he nas but seven yer old,
And therfore litel tale hath he told
Of eny drem, so holy was his hert.
By God, I hadde lever than my schert,
That ye had*de* rad his legend, as have I.
Dame Pertelot, I say yow trewely,
Macrobius, that writ the avisioun
In Auffrik of the worthy Cipioun,

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Affermeth dremes, and saith that thay been
Warnyng of thinges that men after seen.
And forthermore, I pray yow loketh wel
In the olde Testament, of Daniel,
If he huld dremes eny vanyté.
Rede eek of Joseph, and ther schal ye see
Whethir dremes ben som tyme (I say nought alle)
Warnyng of thinges that schul after falle.
Lok of Egipt the king, daun Pharao,
His baker and his botiler also,
Whethir thay felte noon effect in dremis.
Who-so wol seke actes of sondry remys,
May rede of dremes many a *wonder* thing.
Lo Cresus, which that was of Lydes king,
Mette *he nouht* that he sat upon a tre,
Which signified he schuld hanged be?
Lo hir Andromachia, Ectors wif,
That day that Ector schulde lese his lif,
Sche dremed on the same night byforn,
How that the lif of Ector schulde be lorn,
If thilke day he wente *in*-to batayle;
Sche warned him, but it mighte nought availe;
He wente forth to fighte natheles,
And he was slayn anoon of Achilles.
But thilke tale is al to long to telle,
And eek it is neigh day, I may not duelle.
Schortly I say, as for conclusion,
That I schal have of this avisioun
Adversité; and I say forthermore,
That I ne telle of laxatifs no store,
For thay ben venemous, I wot it wel;
I hem defye, I love hem never a del.
"Now let us speke of mirthe, and lete al this;
Madame Pertilot, so have I blis,
Of o thing God hath me sent large grace;
For whan I see the beauté of your face,
Ye ben so scarlet *reede* about your eyghen.
It makith al my drede for to deyghen,
For, also siker as *In principio*
Mulier est hominis confusio.
(Madame, the sentence of this Latyn is,
Womman is mannes joye and mannes blis.)
For when I fiele a-night your softe syde,
Al be it that I may not on you ryde,
For that your perche is mad so narrow, allas!
I am so ful of joye and *of* solas,

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That I defye both swevene and drem."
And with that word he fleigh doun fro the beem,
For it was day, and eek his hennes alle;
And with a chuk he gan hem for to calle,
For he hadde found a corn, lay in the yard.
Real he was, he was nomore aferd;
He fetherid Pertelote twenty tyme,
And trad as ofte, er that it was prime.
He lokith as it were a grim lioun;
And on his toon he rometh up and doun,
Him deyned not to set his foot to grounde.
He chukkith, whan he hath a corn i-founde,
And to him rennen than his wifes alle.
Thus real, as a prince is in his halle,
Leve I this chaunteclere in his pasture;
And after wol I telle his adventure.
Whan that the moneth in which the world bigan,
That highte March, whan God makede first man,
Was complet, and y-passed were also,
Syn March bygan, tway monthes and dayes tuo,
Byfell that Chaunteclere in al his pride,
His seven wyves walkyng by his syde,
Cast up his eyghen to the brighte sonne,
That in the signe of Taurus had i-ronne
Twenty degrees and oon, and somwhat more;
He knew by kynde, and by noon other lore,
That it was prime, and crew with blisful steven.
"The sonne," he sayde, "is clomben up on heven
Twenty degrees and oon, and more i-wis.
Madame Pertelot, my worldes blis,
Herknith these blisful briddes how thay synge,
And seth these freissche floures how thay springe;
Ful is myn hert of revel and solaas."
But sodeinly him fel a sorwful caas;
For ever the latter end of joye is wo.
God wot that worldy joye is soone ago;
And if a rethor couthe faire endite,
He in a chronique saufly might *hit* write,
As for a soverayn notabilite.
Now every wys man let him herkne me;
This story is also trewe, I undertake,
As is the book of Launcelot the Lake,
That womman huld in ful gret reverence.
Now wol I torne agayn to my sentence.
A colefox, ful of sleight *and* iniquité,
That in the grove hadde woned yeeres thre,

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By heigh ymaginacioun forncast,
The same nighte thurghout the heggis brast
Into the yerd, ther Chaunteclere the faire
Was wont, and eek his wyves, to repaire ;
And in a bed of wortes stille he lay,
Til it was passed undern of the day,
Waytyng his tyme on Chaunteclere to falle ;
As gladly doon these homicides alle,
That in awayte lyggen to morthre men.
O false mordrer lurkyng in thy den !
O newe Scariot, newe Genilon !
Fals dissimilour, O Greke Sinon,
That broughtest Troye al outrely to sorwe !
O Chauntecler, accursed be the morwe,
That thou into the yerd floughe fro the bemys !
Thow were ful wel i-warned by thy dremys,
That thilke day was perilous to the.
But what that God forwot moste needes be,
After the opynyoun of certeyn clerkis.
Witnesse on him, that eny *parfit* clerk is,
That in scole is gret altercacioun
In this matier, and gret desputesoun,
And hath ben of an hundred thousend men.
But yit I can not bult it to the bren,
As can the holy doctor Augustyn,
Or Boece, or the bisshop Bradwardyn,
Whether that Goddis worthy forwetyng
Streigneth me needely for to do a thing,
(Needely clepe I simple necessité) ;
Or elles if fre choys be graunted me
To do that same thing, or to do it nought,
Though God forwot it, er that it was wrought ;
Or of his wityng streyneth never a deel,
But by necessité condicionel.
I wol not have to do of such matiere ;
My tale is of a cok, as ye schal hiere,
That took his counseil of his wyf with sorwe,
To walken in the yerd upon the morwe,
That he hadde met the dreme, that I *yow* tolde.
Wymmens counseiles ben ful ofte colde :
Wommannes counseil brought us first to woo,
And made Adam fro paradys to go.
Ther as he was ful mery, and wel at ease.
But for I not, to *whom* it mighte displease,
If I counseil of womman wolde blame,
Pas over, for I sayd it in my game.

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Red auctours, wher thay trete of such matiere,
And what thay sayn of wommen ye may heere.
These been the cokkes wordes, and not myne
I can noon harme of *no* wommen divine.
Faire in the sond, to bathe hir merily,
Lith Pertelot, and alle hir sustres by,
Agayn the sonne; and Chaunteclere so free
Sang merier than the meremayd in the see;
For Phisiologus seith sicurly,
How that thay syngen wel and merily.
And so byfel that as he cast his ye
Among the wortes on a boterflye,
He was war of this fox that lay ful lowe.
No thing ne list him thanne for to crowe,
But cryde anon, "cok, cok," and up he sterte,
As man that was affrayed in his herte.
For naturelly a beest desireth flee
Fro his contrarie, if he may it see,
Though he never er hadde seyn it with his ye.
This Chaunteclere, whan he gan it aspye,
He wold han fled, but that the fox anon
Said, "Gentil sire, allas! why wol ye goon?
Be ye affrayd of me that am youre frend?
Now certes, I were worse than eny feend,
If I to yow wold harm or vilonye.
I am not come your counsail to espye.
But trewely the cause of my comynge
Was only for to herken how ye singe,
For trewely ye have als mery a steven,
As eny aungel hath, that is in heven;
Therwith ye han of musik more felynge,
Than hadde Boece, or eny that can synge.
My lord your fader (God his soule blesse)
And *eke* youre moder of her gentilesse
Han in myn hous ibeen, to my gret ease;
And certes, sire, ful fayn wold I yow please.
But for men speke of syngyng, I wol saye,
So mot I brouke wel myn yen twaye,
Save ye, I herde never man so synge,
As dede your fadir in the morwenynge.
Certes it was of hert al that he song.
And for to make his vois the more strong,
He wolde so peynen him, that with bothe his yen
He moste wynke, so lowde he wolde crien,
And stonden on his typtoon therwithal,
And streche forth his necke long and smal.

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And eek he was of such discressioun,
That ther nas no man in no regioun
That him in song or wisdom mighte passe.
I have wel rad in daun Burnel thasse
Among his verses, how ther was a cok,
That, for a prestes sone yaf him a knok
Upon his leg, whil he was yong and nyce,
He made him for to lese his benefice.
But certeyn ther is no comparisoun
Betwix the wisdom and discressioun
Of youre fader, and of his subtilté.
Now syngeth, sire, for seinte Charité,
Let se, can ye your fader countrefete?"
This Chaunteclere his wynges gan to bete,
As man that couthe his tresoun nought espye,
So was he ravyssht with his flaterie.
Allas! lordynges, many a fals flatour
Is in your hous, and many a losengour,
That pleasen yow wel more, by my faith,
Than he that sothfastnesse unto yow saith.
Redith Ecclesiast of flaterie;
Beth war, ye lordes, of her treccherie.
This Chaunteclere stood heighe upon his toos,
Strecching his necke, and held his yhen cloos,
And gan to crowe lowde for the noones;
And daun Russel the fox stert up at oones,
And by the garget hente Chaunteclere,
And on his bak toward the woode him bere.
For yit was there no man that him sewed.
O desteny, that maist not ben eschiewed!
Allas, that Chaunteclere fleigh fro the bemis!
Allas, his wif ne roughte nought of dremis!
And on a Friday fel al this meschaunce.
O Venus, that art goddesse of pleasaunce,
Syn that thy servant was this Chaunteclere,
And in thy service did al his powere,
More for delit, than the world to multiplie,
Why woldest thou suffre him on thy day to dye?
O Gaufred, dere mayster soverayn,
That, whan the worthy king Richard was slayn
With schot, compleynedist his deth so sore,
Why ne had I nought thy sentence and thy lore,
The Friday for to chiden, as dede ye?
(For on a Fryday sothly slayn was he.)
Than wold I schewe *yow* how that I couthe pleyne,
For Chauntecleres drede, and for his peyne.

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Certis such cry ne lamentacioun
Was never of ladies maad, whan Ilioun
Was wonne, and Pirrus with his streite swerd,
Whan he had hente kyng Priam by the berd,
And slaugh him (as saith us *Eneydos*),
As maden alle the hennes in the clos,
Whan they hadde seyn of Chauntecler the sighte.
But soveraignly dam Pertelote schrighte,
Ful lowder than did Hasdrubaldes wyf,
Whan that hir housebond hadde lost his lyf,
And that the Romayns had i-brent Cartage,
Sche was so ful of torment and of rage,
That wilfully unto the fuyr sche sterte,
And brend hirselven with a stedfast herte.
O woful hennes, right so cride ye,
As, whan that Nero brente the cité
Of Rome, criden the senatoures wyves,
For that her housbondes losten alle here lyves;
Withouten gult this Nero hath hem slayn.
Now wol I torne to my matier agayn.
The sely wydow, and hir doughtres tuo,
Herden these hennys crie and maken wo,
And out at dores starte thay anoon,
And sawen the fox toward the *grove* goon,
And bar upon his bak the cok away;
They criden, "Out! harrow and wayleway!
Ha, ha, the fox!" and after him thay ranne,
And eek with staves many another manne;
Ran Colle our dogge, and Talbot, and Garlond,
And Malkyn, with a distaf in hir hond;
Ran cow and calf, and eek the verray hogges
Sore fered were for berkyng of dogges,
And schowtyng of the men and wymmen eke,
Thay ronne that thay thought her herte breke.
Thay yelleden as feendes doon in helle;
The dokes criden as men wold hem quelle;
The gees for fere flowen over the trees;
Out of the hyves cam the swarm of bees;
So hidous was the noyse, a *benedicite!*
Certes *he* Jakke Straw, and his meyné,
Ne maden schoutes never half so schrille,
Whan that thay wolden eny Flemyng kille.
As thilke day was maad upon the fox.
Of bras thay broughten hornes and of box,
Of horn and boon, in which thay blew and powpede,
And therwithal thay schryked and thay howpede:

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It semed *tho* as that heven schulde falle.
Now, goode men, I pray *yow* herkneth alle;
Lo, how fortune torneth sodeinly
The hope and pride eek of her enemy!
This cok that lay upon this foxes bak,
In al his drede, unto the fox he spak,
And saide, "Sire, if that I were as ye,
Yet schuld I sayn (as wis*ly* God helpe me),
Turneth ayein, ye proude cherles alle!
A verray pestilens upon yow falle!
Now am I come unto this woodes syde,
Maugre youre hede, the cok schal heer abyde;
I wol him ete in faith, and that anoon."
The fox answerd, "In faith, it schal be doon."
And whil he spak that word, al sodeinly
This cok brak from his mouth delyverly,
And heigh upon a tree he fleigh anoon.
And whan the fox seigh that he was i-goon,
"Allas!" quod he, "O Chaunteclere, allas?
I have to yow," quod he, "y-don trespas,
Inasmoche as I makid yow aferd,
Whan I yow hent, and brought out of the yerd;
But, sire, I dede it *nought* in no wickid entente;
Com doun, and I schal telle yow what I mente.
I schal say soth to yow, God help me so."
"Nay than," quod he, "I schrew us bothe tuo.
And first I schrew myself, bothe blood and boones,
If thou bigile me any ofter than oones.
Thou schalt no more, thurgh thy flaterye,
Do me to synge and wynke with myn ye.
For he that wynkith, whan he scholde see,
Al wilfully, God let him never the!"
"Nay," quod the fox, "but God yive him meschaunce,
That is so undiscret of governaunce,
That jangleth, when he scholde holde his pees."
Lo, such it is for to be recheles,
And necligent, and trust on flaterie.
But ye that holde this tale a folye,
As of a fox, or of a cok or of an hen,
Takith the moralité therof, goode men.
For seint Poul saith, that al that writen is,
To oure doctrine it is i-write i-wys.
Takith the fruyt, and let the chaf be stille.
Now, goode God, if that it be thy wille,
As saith my lord, so make us alle goode men;
And bring us alle to his *highe* blisse. *Amen.*

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THE

FLOWER AND THE LEAF.

THE ARGUMENT.

A gentlewoman out of an arbour in a grove seeth a great company of knights and ladies in a dance upon the green grass; the which being ended, they all kneel down and do honour to the daisy, some to the Flower, and some to the Leaf. Afterward this gentlewoman learneth, by one of these ladies, the meaning hereof, which is this: They which honour the Flower, a thing fading with every blast, are such as look after beauty and worldly pleasure; but they that honour the Leaf, which abideth with the root, notwithstanding the frosts and winter storms, are they which follow virtue and during qualities, without regard of worldly respects.

When that Phebus his chaire of gold so hie
Hadde whirled up the sterrie sky alofte,
And in the Boole was entred certainely:
When shoures sweet of raine discended softe,
Causing the ground, fele times and ofte,
Up for to give many an wholsome aire,
And every plaine was *eke* yclothed faire

With newe green, and maketh smalle floures
To springen here and there in field and mede;
So very good and wholsome be the shoures,
That it renueth that was old and dede
In winter time; and out of every sede
Springeth the hearbe, so that every wight
Of this season wexeth *ful* glad and light.

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And I, so glad of the season *thus* swete,
Was happed thus upon a certaine nighte :—
As I lay in my bed, sleepe ful unmete
Was unto me, but why that I ne mighte
Rest, I ne wiste ; for there nas earthly wight,
As I suppose, hadde more heartes ease
Than I, for I nadde sicknesse nor disease.

Wherefore I mervaile greatly of my selfe,
That I withouten sleepe so longe lay ;
And up I rose three houres after twelfe,
Aboute the springing of the day ;
And on I putte my geare and mine array,
And to a pleasaunt grove I gan *to* passe,
Long or the brighte Sonne up-risen was ;

In which were okes greate, streight as a line,
Under the which the grasse, so fresh of hewe,
Was newly sprong ; and an eight foot or nine
Every tree well fro his fellow grew,
With branches brode, lade with leves newe,
That sprongen out ayen the sunne shene,
Some very red, and some a glad light grene ;

Which, as me thoughte, was right a plesant sight ;
And eke the briddes songes for to here
Would have rejoyced any earthly wight ;
And I that couthe not yet, in no manere,
Heare the nightingale of all the yeare,
Ful busily herkened with hart and eare,
If I her voice perceive coud any where.

And, at the last, a path of little breede
I found, that greatly hadde not used be ;
For it forgrowen was with grasse and weede,
That well unneth a wight *ne* might it se :
Thoght I, "This path some whider goth, pardé!"
And so I followede, till it me broughte
To right a pleasaunt herber, well ywrought,

That benched was, and *eke* with turfes new
Freshly turved, whereof the grene gras,
So small, so thicke, so short, so fresh of hewe,
That most *ylike* greene wool, I wot, it was :
The hegge also that yede in *this* compas,
And closed in all the greene herbere,
With sicamour was set and eglatere,

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Wrethen in fere so well and cunningly,
That every branch and leafe grew by mesure,
Plaine as a bord, of *oon* height by and by.
I *ne segh* never thing, I you ensure,
So well *y*-done; for he that tooke the cure
It *for* to make, Y trow did all his peine
To make it passe alle tho that men have seine.

And shapen was this herber, roofe and all,
As *is* a prety parlour; and also
The hegge as thicke as *is* a castle wall,
That who that list withoute to stond or go,
Though he would all day prien to and fro,
He shoulde not see if there were any wighte
Within or no; but one within wel mighte

Perceive alle tho that yeden there withoute
Into the field, that was on every side
Covered with corne and grasse; that out of doubt,
Though one woulde seeke all the worlde wide,
So rich a fielde *ne* coude not be espide
On *any* coast, as of the quantitie;
For of alle good thing there was plentie.

And I that all this pleasaunt sight *ay* sie,
Thought sodainly I felte so sweet an aire
Com of the eglentere, that certainely
There is no heart, I deme, in such dispaire,
Ne with *no* thoughtes froward and contraire
So overlaid, but it shoulde soone have bote,
If it had ones felt this savour sote.

And as I stood and cast aside mine eie,
I was of ware the fairest medler tree,
That ever yet in all my life I sie,
As full of blossomes as it mighte be;
Therein a goldfinch leaping pretile
Fro bough to bough; and, as him list, *gan* eete
Of buddes here and there and floures sweete.

And to the herber side *ther* was joyninge
This faire tree, of which I have you told;
And at the last the brid began to singe,
When he had eaten what he eate wolde,
So passing sweetly, that by manifolde
It was more pleasaunt than I coude devise.
And when his song was ended in this wise,

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The nightingale with so mery a note
Answered him, that all the woode rong
So sodainly, that, as it were a sote,
I stood astonied; so was I with the song
Thorow ravished, that till late and longe,
Ne wist I in what place I was, ne where;
And ay, me thoughte, she song even by mine ere.

Wherefore about I waited busily,
On every side, if *that* I her mighte see;
And, at the last, I gan full well aspie
Where she sat in a fresh grene laurer tree,
On the further side, even right by me,
That gave so passing a delicious smell,
According to the eglentere full well.

Whereof I hadde so inly great pleasure,
That, as me thought, I surely ravished was
Into Paradice, where *as* my desire
Was for to be, and no ferther to passe
As for that day; and on the sote grasse
I sat me downe; for, as for mine entent,
The birddes song was more convenient,

And more pleasaunt to me by many fold,
Than meat or drinke, or any other thing.
Thereto the herber was so fresh and cold,
The wholesome savours eke so comforting,
That, as I demede, sith the beginning
Of thilke world was never seene or than
So pleasaunt a ground of none earthly man.

And as I sat, the birddes harkening thus,
Me thoughte that I hearde voices sodainly,
The most sweetest and most delicious
That ever any wight, I trow truly,
Heard in *here* life; for *sothe* the armony
And sweet accord was in so good musike,
That the voices to angels most was like.

And at the last, out of a grove *faste* by,
That was right goodly and pleasant to sight,
I sie where there came, singing lustily,
A world of ladies; but, to tell aright
Here grete beautie, it lieth not in my might,
Ne *here* array; neverthelesse I shalle
Telle you a part, though I speake not of alle.

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The surcotes white, of velvet wele sitting,
They were in clad, and the semes echone,
As it were a maner garnishing,
Was set with emeraudes, one and one.
But by and by *ful* many a riche stone
Was set on the purfiles, out of doute,
Of colors, sleves, and traines round aboute.

As greate pearles, round and oriente,
Diamondes fine, and rubies rede
And many another stone, of which I wente
The names now; and everich on her heade
A riche fret of gold, which, withoute dreade,
Was full of stately riche stones set;
And every lady had a chapelet

Upon her head of *floures* fresh and greene,
So wele ywrought and so mervellously,
That *soth* it was a noble sight to seene;
Some of laurer, and some full pleasantly
Hadde chapelets of woodbind, and sadly
Some of *agnus castus* were also
Chapelets freshe; but there were many tho

That song and daunced, eke ful soberly,
And all they yede in manner of compace;
But one there yede in mid the company,
Soole by her selfe; but alle followede the pace
Which that she kepte, whose heavenely *faire* face
So pleasaunt was, and her wele shape person,
That of beautie she past hem everichone.

And more richly beseene, by manifold,
She was also in every maner thing:
Upon her head, full pleasaunt to beholde,
A crowne of gold riche for any king:
A braunch of *agnus castus* eke bearing
In her hand; and to my sight truly,
She lady was of *al* the company.

And she began a roundell lustely,
That "*Suse le foyle, devers moy,*" men calle,
"*Seen et mon joly cuer est endormy;*"
And than the company answered alle,
With voices sweet entuned, and so smalle
That it me thoughte the sweetest melody
That ever I heard in my life soothly.

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And thus they came, dauncing and singing
Into the middest of the mede echone,
Before the herber where I was sitting;
And, God wot, me thought I was wel bigone;
For then I might avise hem one by one,
Who fairest was, who coude best dance or singe,
Or who most womanly was in alle thinge.

They hadde not daunced but a little throwe,
When that I hearde not ferre off sodainely,
So great a noise of thundering trumpes blowe,
As though it should have departed the skie;
And, after that, within a while I sie,
From the same grove where the ladies come oute,
Of men of armes coming such a route,

As alle the men on earth hadde ben assembled
In that place, wele horsed for the nones,
Stering so faste, that al the earth trembled:
But for to speake of riches and *of* stones,
And men and horse, I trow the large wones
Of Prestir John, ne all his tresorie,
Mighte not unneth have boght the tenth partie

Of *here* array: who so list heare more,
I shall rehearse so as I can a lite.
Out of the grove, that I of spake before,
I sie come first, all in *here* clokes white,
A company, that ware, for *here* delite,
Chapelets fresh of okes serialle,
Newly *y*spronge, and trumpets they were alle.

On every trumpe hanging a broad banere
Of fine tartarium ful richely bete;
Every trumpet his lordes armes bere;
About *here* neckes, with greate pearles sete,
Colleres brode; for cost they woulde not lete,
As it woulde seeme, for *here* scochones echone
Were set aboute with many a precious stone.

Here horse harneis was all white also.
And after *hem* next, in one company,
Came kinges of armes, and no mo,
In clokes of white cloth of gold richly;
Chapelets of greene on *here* heades on hie;
The crownes that they on *here* scochones bere,
Were set with pearle, ruby, and saphere,

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And eke great diamondes many one :
But all *here* horse harneis and other geare
Was in a sute accordinge, everychone,
As ye have heard the foresaid trumpets were ;
And, by seeming, they were nothing to lere,
And *here* guiding they dide so manerly.
And, after hem, came a great company

Of heraudes and pursevauntes eke,
Arrayed in clothes of whit velvette,
And, hardily, they were no thing to seke,
How they on hem shoulde the harneis sette ;
And every man had on a chapelet ;
Scochones and eke horse harneis, indede,
They had in sute of hem that before hem yede.

Next after hem camen, in armour bright
All save *here* heades, seemely knightes nine ;
And every claspe and naile, as to my sight,
Of *here* harneis were of red golde fine ;
With cloth of gold, and furred with ermine
Were the trappores of *here* stedes stronge,
Wide and large, that to the ground dide honge.

And every bosse of bridle and paitrell
That hadde they, was worth, as I woulde wene,
A thousand pound ; and on *here* heades, well
Dressed, were crownes of laurer grene,
The best *y*made that ever I hadde sene ;
And every knight had after him riding
Three henshemen on him *ay* awaiting.

Of which every *first*, on a short tronchoun,
His lordes helme bare, so richly dight,
That the worst was worth the ransoun
Of a*ny* king ; the second a shield bright
Bare at his *backe ;* the thridde bare upright
A mightie spere, full sharpe *y*ground and kene,
And every child *eke* ware of leaves grene

A fresh chapelet upon his haires brighte ;
And clokes white of fine velvet they were ;
Here steedes trapped and *arr*aied righte,
Withoute difference, as *here* lordes were ;
And after hem, on many a fresh corsere,
There came of armede knightes such a route,
That they bespradde the large field aboute.

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And all they ware, after *here* degrees,
Chapelets newe made of laurer grene;
Some of *the* oke, and some of other trees,
Some in *here* hondes bare boughes shene,
Some of laurer, and some of okes kene,
Some of hauthorne, and some of *the* woodbind,
And many mo which I hadde not in mind.

And so they came, *here* horses freshly stering
With bloodie sownes of her trompes loude;
There sie I many an uncouth disguising
In the array of these knightes proude;
And at the last, as evenly as they coude,
They took *here* places in middes of the mede,
And every knight turned his horse hede

To his fellow, and lightly laid a spere
In the arest; and so justes began
On every part abouten, here and there;
Some brake his spere, some drew down hors and manne;
Aboute the field astray the steedes ranne;
And, to behold *here* rule and governaunce,
I you ensure, it was a great pleasaunce.

And so the justes last an houre and more;
But tho that crowned were in laurer grene
Wanne the prise; *here* dintes were so sore,
That there was none ayenst hem mighte sustene:
And the justing all was yleft off clene,
And fro *here* horse the ninth alight anone,
And so did all the remnant everichone.

And forth they yede togider, twain and twain,
That to behold it was a worthy sight,
Toward the ladies on the greene plaine,
That song and daunced, as I saide now righte:
The ladies *tho*, soone as they goodly mighte,
They braken of bothe the song and dance,
And yede to meet hem with ful glad semblance.

And every lady tooke, full womanly,
By the *right* hond a knight, and forth they yede
Unto a faire laurer that stood fast by,
With leves lade, the boughes of great brede;
And to my dome there never was, indede,
Man that hadde seene halfe so faire a tree;
For underneath there might it well have be

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An hundred persons, at *here* owne plesance,
Shadowed fro the heat of Phebus bright,
So that they shoulde*n* have felt no grevaunce
Of raine ne haile that hem *ne* hurte mighte.
The savour eke rejoice would any wighte
That hadde be sicke or melancolius,
It was so very good and vertuous.

And with great reverence encline they lowe
To thilke tree so soot, and faire of hewe;
And after that, within a little throwe,
They beganne to singe and daunce of newe
Some song of love, some plaining of untrewe,
Environinge the tree that stood upright;
And ever yede a lady and a knight.

And at the last mine eye I caste aside,
And was ware of a lustie company
That came roming out of the field wide,
Hond in hond a knight and a lady;
The ladies all in surcotes, that richely
Purfiled were with many a rich stone,
And every knight of grene ware mantles on,

Embrouded well so as the surcotes were:
And everich had a chapelet on her hede,
Which dide right well upon the shining here,
I-made of goodly floures white and rede;
The knightes eke, that they in hond *gan* lede,
In sute of hem ware chapelets everychone,
And before hem wente minstrels many one.

As harpes, pipes, lutes, and sautry,
All in greene; and on *here* heades bare,
Of divers floures, made full craftely,
All in a sute, goodly chapelets they ware;
And, so dauncing, into the mede they fare.
In mid the which they found a tuft that was
Al oversprad with floures in compas.

Whereto they enclined everychone
With great reverence, and that full humbly;
And, at the laste, there began anone
A lady for to singe right womanly
A bargaret in praising the daisie;
For, as me thought, among her notes swete,
She said "*Si douse est la Margarete.*"

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Than they all answered her in fere,
So passingly well, and so pleasauntly,
That *soth* it was a blisfull noise to here.
But, I not *how*, it happede suddainly
As aboute noone, the sonne so fervently
Waxe hote, that the pretie tendre floures
Hadde lost the beautie of her freshe colours,

Forshronke with heat; the ladies eke to-brent,
That they ne wiste where hem to bestowe;
The knightes swelte, for lack of shade nie shent;
And after that, within a little throwe,
The wind began so sturdily to blowe,
That down goeth alle the floures everichone,
So that in all the mede there laft not one;

Save such as succoured were among the leves
Fro every storme that mighte hem assaile,
Growing under hedges and thicke greves;
And after that there came a storme of haile
And raine in fere, so that, withouten faile,
The ladies ne the knightes nade o threed
Drie *upon hem*, so dropping was her weed.

And whan the storm was cleane passed away,
Tho *clad* in white that stoode under the tree,
They felte nothing of the great affray,
That they in greene without had in ybe;
To *hem* they yede for routhe and pité,
Hem to comfort after *here* greate disease,
So faine they were the helplesse for to ease.

Than was I ware how one of hem in grene
Had on a crowne, *ful* rich and wel sitting;
Wherefore I demed wel she was a quene,
And tho in greene on her were awaiting;
The ladies then in white that were comming
Towardes *hem*, and the knightes in fere,
Beganne hem to comfort, and make hem chere.

The queen in white, that was of great beauty,
Tooke by the hond the queen that was in grene,
And said, "Suster, I have right great pitie
Of your annoy, and of the troublous tene,
Wherein ye and your company have bene
So long, alas! and if that it you please
To go with me, I shall do you the ease,

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"In all the pleasure that I can or may;"
Whereof the tother, humbly as she mighte,
Thanked her; for in right ill array
She was with storm and heat, I you behighte;
And every lady, then anone right,
That were in white, one of *hem* took in grene
By the hond; which when the knightes hadde sene,

In like wise ech of *hem* tooke *hir* a knight
I-clad in greene, and forth with hem they fare,
Un-to an hegge, where they anon *gan* right
To make *here* justes, woulde they not spare
Boughes to hewe down, and eke trees square,
Wherwith they made hem stately fires greate,
To dry *here* clothes that were wringing weate.

And after that, of hearbes that there grewe,
They made, for blisters of the sunne brenning,
Very good and wholesome ointmentes newe,
Where that they yede the sicke fast anointing;
And after that they yede aboute gadering
Pleasaunt salades, which they made hem eate,
For to refresh *here* greate unkindly heate.

The lady of the Leafe then *gan* to praye
Her of the Floure (for so to my seeming
They shoulde be, as by *here* arraye)
To soupe with her, and eek, for any thing,
That she shoulde with her all her people bringe;
And she ayen, in right goodly manere,
Thanketh her of her most friendly cheare,

Saying plainely, that she would obaye
With all her hart all her commaundement;
And then anon, withoute lenger delaye,
The lady of the Leafe hath one ysent
For a palfray, *as* after her intent,
Arrayed well and faire in harneis of golde,
For nothing lacked, that to him long sholde.

And after that, to all her company
She made to purvey horse and every thing
That they needed; and then ful lustily,
Even by the herber where I was sitting,
They passed alle, so pleasantly singing,
That it would have comforted any wight.
But then I sie a passing wonder sight;

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For then the nightingale, that all the day
Had in the laurer sete, and did her might
The whole service to singe longing to May,
All sodainly *be*gan to take her flight;
And to the lady of the Leafe, forthright,
She flew, and set her on her hond softly,
Which was a thing I marveled of greatly.

The goldfinch eke, that fro the medler tree
Was fled for heat into the bushes colde,
Unto the lady of the Flower gan flee,
And on her hond he set him as he wolde,
And pleasauntly his winges gan to folde;
And for to singe they pained hem both, as sore
As they hadde do of all the day before.

And so these ladies rode forth a great pace,
And all the rout of knightes eke in fere;
And I that hadde seene all this wonder case,
Thought I would assay in some manere,
To knowe fully the trouth of this matere;
And what they were that rode so pleasantly.
And when they were the herber passed by,

I dreste me forth, and happede to mete anone
Right a faire lady, I you ensure;
And she come riding by herselfe alone,
All in white; with semblance ful demure
I *salued* her, and bad her good aventure
Might her befall, as I coude most humbly;
And she answerede, "My doughter, gramercy!"

"Madame," quod I, "if that I durst enquere
Of you, I woulde faine, of that company,
Wite what they be that paste by this arbere?"
And she ayen answerede right friendly:—
"My faire doughter, all tho that passed here by
In white clothing, be servaunts everichone
Unto the Leafe, and I myselfe am one.

"See ye not her that crowned is," quod she,
"All in white?"—"Madame," quod I, "yis:"
"That is Diané, goddesse of chastité;
And for because that she a maiden is,
In her *own* hond the braunch she beareth *iwis*,
That *agnus castus* men calle properly;
And alle the ladies in her company,

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" Which as ye se of that hearb chapelets weare,
Be such as han kept alway hir maidenheed :
And alle they that of laurer chaplets beare,
Be such as hardy were, and manly indeed,—
Victorious name which never may be dede !
And alle they were so worthy of *here* honde,
That in her time none might hem withstonde.

" And tho that weare chaplets on *here* hede
Of fresh woodbind, be such as never were
To love untrue in word, *in* thought, ne dede,
But aye stedfast ; ne for pleasaunce, ne fere,
Thogh that they shuld *here* hertes al to-tere,
Woulde *ne* flitte but ever were stedfaste,
Til that *here* lives there asunder *braste*."

" Now faire madame," quod I, " yet would I pray
Your ladiship, if that it mighte be,
That I mighte knowe, by some maner way,
(Sith that it hath *i*-liked your beauté,
The trouth of these ladies for to telle me) ;
What that these knightes be in rich armour,
And what tho be in grene and weare the flour ?

" And why that some dide reverence to the tre,
And some unto the plot of floures faire ?"
" With right good will, my fair doghter," quod she,
" Sith your desire is good and debonaire ;
Tho nine crowned be very exemplaire
Of all honour longing to chivalry ;
And those certaine be called the Nine Worthy,

" Which ye may see *now* riding all before,
That in her time dide many a noble dede,
And for *here* worthinesse full oft have bore
The crowne of laurer leaves on *here* hede,
As ye may in your olde bookes rede ;
And how that he that was a conquerour,
Hadde by laurer alway his most honour.

" And tho that beare bowes in *here* honde
Of the precious laurer so notable,
Be such as were, I woll ye understonde,
Noble knightes of the rounde table,
And eke the Douseperis honourable,
Which they beare*n* in signe of victory ;
It is witnesse of *here* deedes mightily.

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"Eke there be knightes old of the garter,
That in her time dide right worthily;
And the honour they dide to the laurer,
Is for by *it* they have *here* laud wholly,
Here triumph eke, and marshall glory;
Which unto *hem* is more parfit richesse,
Than any wight imagine can or gesse.

"For one leafe given of that noble tree
To any wight that hath done worthily,
And it be done so as it oughte to be,
Is more honour than anything earthly;
Witnesse of Rome that founder was truly
Of all knighthood and deedes marvelous;
Record I take of Titus Livius.

"And as for her that crowned is in greene,
It is Flora, of these floures goddesse;
And all that here on her awaiting beene,
It are such *folk* that loved idlenesse,
And not delite *hadde* of no businesse,
But for to hunt and hauke, and pley in medes,
And many other such idle dedes.

"And for the greate delite and pleasaunce
They have to the floure, and so reverently
They unto it do such *grete* obeisaunce
As ye may se."—"Now faire Madame," quod I,
"If I durst aske what is the cause and why,
That knightes have the signe of honour,
Wel rather by the leafe than by the flour?"

"Soothly, doughter," quod she, "this is the trouth:—
For knightes ever shoulde be persevering,
To seeke honour without feintise or slouth,
Fro wele to better in all manner thing;
In signe of which, with leaves aye lasting
They be rewarded after *here* degré,
Whose lusty green may not appaired be,

"But aie keping *here* beautie fresh and greene;
For there nis storme that *ne* may hem deface,
Ne haile nor snow, *ne* winde nor frostes kene;
Wherfore they have this propertie and grace.
And for the floure, within a little space
Woll be *i*-lost, so simple of nature
They be, that they no greevance may endure

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"And every storme will blow *hem* soone awaye,
Ne laste they not but for *oon* season;
That is the cause, the very trouth to saye,
That they maye not, by no way of reason,
Be put to no such occupation."
"Madame," quod I, "with all mine whole servise
I thanke you now, in my most humble wise;

"For now I am acertained throughly,
Of every thing I desired to knowe."
"I am right glad that I have said, sothly,
Ought to your pleasure, if ye wille me trowe,"
Quod she ayen, "but to whom do ye owe
Your service? and which wolle ye honoure,
Tel me I pray, this yere, the Leafe or the Floure?"

"Madame," quod I, "though I *be* least worthy,
Unto the Leafe I owe mine observaunce:"
"That is," quod she, "right well done certainly;
And pray I God to honour you avaunce,
And kepe you fro the wicked remembraunce
Of Malebouch, and all his crueltie,
And all that good and well conditioned be.

"For here may I no lenger now abide,
I muste followe the greate company,
That ye maye see yonder before you ride."
And *tho* forth, as I couthe, most humbly,
I tooke my leve of her, as she gan hie
After *hem* as fast as ever she mighte;
And I drow homeward, for it was nigh nighte,

And put all that I hadde seene in writing,
Under support of *hem* that lust it to rede.
O little booke, thou art so unconning,
How darst thou put thy-self in prees, for drede?
It is wonder that thou wexest not rede!
Sith that thou wost full lite who shall beholde
Thy rude language, ful boistously unfolde.

EXPLICIT.

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THE WYF OF BATHES TALE.

In olde dayes of the kyng Arthour,
Of which that Britouns speken gret honour,
Al was this lond fulfilled of fayrie;
The elf-queen, with hir joly compaignye,
Daunced*e* ful oft in many a grene mede.
This was the old oppynyoun, as I rede;
I speke of many hundrid yer ago;
But now can no man see noon elves mo.
For now the grete charité and prayeres
Of lymytours and other holy freres,
That sechen every lond and every streem,
As thik as motis in the sonne-beem,
Blessynge halles, chambres, kichenes, and boures,
Citees, burghes, castels hihe and toures,
Thropes, bernes, shepnes and dayeries,
That makith that ther ben no fayeries.
For ther as wont was to walken an elf,
Ther walkith noon but the lymytour himself,
In undermeles and in morwenynges,
And saith his matyns and his holy thinges
As he goth in his lymytatioun.
Wommen may *now* go saufly up and doun;
In every bussch, or under every tre,
Ther is non other incub*us* but he,
And he ne wol doon hem *no* dishonour.
And so bifel it, that this king Arthour
Had in his hous a lusty bacheler,
That on a day com rydyng fro ryver;
And happed, al alone as sche was born,
He saugh a mayde walkyng him byforn,
Of which mayden anoon, maugré hir heed,
By verray fors byraft hir maydenhed.
For which oppressioun was such clamour,
And such pursuyte unto kyng Arthour,
That dampned was the knight and schuld*e* be ded
By cours of lawe, and schuld have lost his heed,
(Paraventure such was the statut tho,)
But that the queen and other ladys mo
So longe preyeden thay the kyng of grace,
Til he his lif hath graunted in the place,

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And yaf him to the queen, al at hir wille
To chese wethir sche wolde him save or spille.
The queen thanked*e* the kyng with al hir might;
And after thus sche spak unto the knight,
Whan that sche saugh hir tyme upon a day:
"Thow stondest yet," quod *s*che, "in such array,
That of thy lyf hastow no sewerté;
I graunte thy lif, if thou canst telle me,
What thing is it that wommen most desiren;
Be war, and keep thy nek-bon fro the iren.
And if thou canst not tellen it anoon,
Yet wol I yive the leve for to goon
A twelfmonth and a day, it for to lere
An answer suffisaunt in this matiere.
And seurté wol I have, er that thou pace,
Thy body for to yelden in this place."
Wo was this knight, and sorwfully he sikede;
But what? he may not doon al as him likede,
And atte last he ches him for to wende,
And cam ayein right at the yeres ende
With swich answer as God him wolde purveye;
And takith his leve, and wendith forth his weye.
He sekith every hous and every place
Wher-so he hopith for to fynde grace,
To lerne what thing wommen loven most;
But he ne couthe arryven in no cost,
Wher as he mighte fynde in this mattiere
Two creatures accordyng in fere.
Some sayden, wommen loven best richesse,
Some sayde honour, and some sayde jolynesse,
Some riche array, some sayden lust on bedde,
And ofte tyme to be wydow and wedde.
Some sayden owre herte is most i-eased
Whan we ben y-flaterid and y-pleased
He goth ful neigh the soth, I wil not lye;
A man schal wynne us best with flaterye;
And with attendaunce, and with busynesse
Ben we y-limid both more and lesse."
And some sayen, that we loven best
For to be fre, and to doon as us lest,
And that no man repreve us of oure vice,
But say that we ben wys, and no thing nyce.
For trewely ther is noon of us alle,
If eny wight wolde claw us on the galle,
That we nyl like, for he saith us soth;
Assay, and he schal fynd it, that so doth.

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For be we never so vicious withinne,
We schuln be holde wys and clene of synne.
And somme sayn, that gret delit han we
For to be holden stabil and secre,
And in oon purpos stedfastly to duelle,
And nought bywreye thing that men us telle.
But that tale is not worth a rakes stele.
Pardy, we wymmen can right no thing hele,
Witnes on Myda; wil ye here the tale?
Ovyd, among his other thinges smale,
Sayde Myda had under his lange heris
Growyng upon his heed tuo asses eeris;
The whiche vice he hid, as he best mighte,
Ful subtilly fro every mannes sighte,
That, save his wyf, ther wist of that nomo;
He loved hir most, and trusted hir also;
He prayed hir, that to no creature
Sche schulde tellen of his disfigure.
Sche swor him, nay, for al this world to wynne,
Sche nolde do that vilonye or synne
To make hir housbond have so foul a name;
Sche wolde not tel it for hir oughne schame.
But natheles hir thoughte that sche dyde,
That sche so longe a counseil scholde hyde;
Hir thought it swal so sore about hir herte,
That needely som word hir most asterte;
And sins sche dorste not tel it unto man,
Doun to a marreys faste by sche ran,
Til sche cam ther, hir herte was on fuyre;
And as a bytoure bumblith in the myre,
Sche layde hir mouth unto the water doun.
"Bywrey me not, thou watir, with thi soun."
Quod sche, "to the I telle it, and nomo,
Myn housbond hath long asse eeris tuo.
Now is myn hert al hool, now is it oute,
I mighte no lenger kepe it out of doute."
Her may ye se, theigh we a tyme abyde,
Yet out it moot, we can no counseil hyde.
The remenaunt of the tale, if ye wil here,
Redith Ovid, and ther ye mow it leere.
  This knight, of which my tale is specially,
Whan that he saugh he mighte nought come therby,
This is to saye, that wommen loven most,
Withinne his brest ful sorwful was the gost.
But hom he goth, he mighte not lenger sojourne,
The day was come, that hom-ward most he torne.

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And in his way, it hapnyd him to ride
In al his care, under a forest side,
Wher as he saugh upon a daunce go
Of ladys four and twenty, and yit mo.
Toward this ilke daunce he drough ful yerne,
In hope that *he* som wisdom schuld i-lerne;
But certeynly, er he com fully there,
Vanysshid was this daunce, he nyste where;
No creature saugh he that bar lif,
Sauf on the greene he saugh sittyng a wyf,
A fouler wight ther may no man devyse.
Ayens the knight this olde wyf gan ryse,
And sayde, "Sir knight, heer forth lith no way;
Tel me what ye seekyn, by your fay
Paradventure it may the better be:
Thise olde folk can mochil thing," quod sche,
"My lieve modir," quod this knight, "certayn
I am but ded but-if that I can sayn
What thing is it that wommen most desire;
Couthe ye me wisse, I wolde wel quyte your huyre."
"Plight me thy trouth her in myn hond," quod sche,
"The nexte thing that I require the,
Thou schalt it doo, if it be in thy might,
And I wol telle it the, er it be night."
"Have her my trouthe," quod the knight, "I graunte."
"Thanne," quod sche, "I dar me wel avaunte,
Thy lif is sauf, for I wol stonde therby,
Upon my lif the queen wol say as I;
Let se, which is the proudest of hem alle,
That werith on a coverchief or a calle,
That dar saye nay of thing I schal the teche.
Let us go forth withouten more speche."
Tho rownede sche a pistil in his eere,
And bad him to be glad, and have no fere.
Whan they ben comen to the court, this knight
Sayd he had holde *his* day, *as* he *hadde* hight,
Al redy was his answer, as he sayde.
Ful many a noble wyf, and many a mayde,
And many a wydow, for that they ben wyse,
The queen hirself sittyng as a justise,
Assemblid ben, his answer for to hiere;
And after-ward this knight was bode appiere,
To every wight comaundid was silence,
And that the knight schulde telle in audience
What thing that worldly wommen loven best.
This knight ne stood not stille, as doth a best,

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But to the questioun anoon answerde,
With manly voys, that al the court it herde;
"My liege lady, generally," quod he,
"Wommen desiren to have soveraynté
As wel over hir housbond as over hir love,
And for to be in maystry him above.
This is the most desir, though ye me kille;
Doth as yow list, I am heer at your wille."
In al the court ne was ther wyf, ne mayde,
Ne wydow, that contrariede that he sayde;
But sayden, he was worthy have his lif.
And with that word upstarte that olde wif,
Which that the knight saugh sittyng on the grene.
"Mercy," quod sche, "my soveraign lady queene,
Er that your court departe, doth me right.
I taughte this answer unto the knight;
For which he plighte me his trouthe there,
The firste thing that I wold him requere,
He wold it do, if it lay in his might.
Before this court then pray I the, sir knight,"
Quod sche, "that thou me take unto thy wyf,
For wel thou wost, that I have kept thy lif;
If I say fals, sey nay, upon thy fey."
This knight answerd, "Allas and waylawey!
I wot right wel that such was my byhest.
For Goddes love, as chese a new request;
Tak al my good, and let my body go."
"Nay," quod sche than, "I schrew us bothe tuo.
For though that I be foule, old, and poure,
I nolde for al the metal ne for the oure
That under erthe is grave, or lith above,
But I thy wife were and eek thy love."
"My love?" quod he, "nay, nay, my dampnacioun.
Allas! that eny of my nacioun
Schuld ever so foule disparagid be!"
But al for nought; the ende is this, that he
Constreigned was, he needes most hir wedde,
And takith his wyf, and goth with hir to bedde.
Now wolden som men say paradventure,
That for my necgligence I do no cure
To telle yow the joye and tharray
That at that fest was maad that ilke day.
To which thing schortly answeren I schal,
And say ther nas feste ne joy at al,
Ther nas but hevynes and mochil sorwe;
For prively he weddyd hir in a morwe,

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And alday hudde him as doth an oule,
So wo was him, his wyf lokede so foule.
Gret was the wo the knight had in his thought
Whan he was with his wyf on bedde brought,
He walwith, and he torneth to an fro.
His olde wyf lay smylyng ever mo,
And sayd, " O deere housbond, *benedicite*,
Fareth every knight with his wyf as ye!
Is this the lawe of king Arthures hous?
Is every knight of his thus daungerous?
I am your oughne love, and eek your wyf,
I am sche that hath savyd your lyf,
And certes ne dede I yow never unright.
Why fare ye thus with me the firste night?
Ye fare lik a man that hadde lest his wit.
What is my gult? for Godes love, tel me it,
And it schal be amendid, if that I may."
" Amendid!" quod this knight, " allas! nay, nay,
It wol nought ben amendid, never mo;
Thow art so lothly, and so old also,
And therto comen of so lowh a kynde,
That litil wonder is though I walwe and wynde;
So wolde God, myn herte wolde breste!"
" Is this," quod sche, " the cause of your unreste?"
" Ye, certeynly," quod he, " no wonder is!"
" Now, sire," quod sche, " I couthe amende al this,
If that me list, er it were dayes thre,
So wel ye mighte bere yow to me.
But for ye speken of such gentilesse
As is descendit out of old richesse,
Therfor schulde ye ben holden gentil men;
Such arrogaunce is not worth an hen.
Lok who that is most vertuous alway,
Privé and pert, and most entendith ay
To do the gentil dedes that he can,
Tak him for the grettest gentil man.
Crist wol we clayme of him oure gentilesse,
Nought of oure eldres for *her olde* richesse.
For though they yive us al her heritage,
For which we clayme to be of high parage,
Yit may thay not biquethe, for no thing
To noon of us, so vertuous lyvyng,
That made hem gentil men y-callid be,
And bad us folwe hem in such degré.
Wel can the wyse poet of Florence,
That hatte Daunt, speke of this sentence;

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Lo, in such maner of rym is Dauntes tale;
Ful seeld uprisith by his braunchis smale
Prowes of man, for God of his prowesse
Wol that we clayme of him our gentilesse;
For of our auncestres we no thing clayme
But temporal thing, that men may hurt and mayme.
Ek every wight wot this as wel as I,
If gentiles were plaunted naturelly
Unto a certayn lignage doun the line,
Privé ne apert, they wolde never fine
To don of gentilesce the fair office,
Thay mighte nought doon no vileny or vice.
Take fuyr and ber it in the derkest hous
Bitwixe this and the mount Caukasous,
And let men shitte the dores, and go thenne,
Yit wol the fuyr as fair and lighte brenne
As twenty thousand men might it biholde;
His office naturel ay wol it holde,
Up peril on my lif, til that it dye.
Her may ye se wel, how that genterye
Is nought annexid to possessioun,
Sithins folk ne doon her operacioun
Alway, as doth the fuyr, lo, in his kynde
For God it wot, men may ful often fynde
A lordes sone do schame and vilonye.
And he that wol have pris of his gentrie,
For he was boren of a gentil hous,
And had his eldres noble and vertuous,
And nyl himselve doo no gentil dedis,
Ne folw his gentil aunceter, that deed is,
He is nought gentil, be he duk or erl;
For vileyn synful deedes maketh a cherl,
For gentilnesse nys but renomé
Of thin auncestres, for her heigh bounté,
Which is a straunge thing to thy persone;
Thy gentilesce cometh fro God alloone.
Than comth oure verray gentilesse of grace,
It was no thing biquethe us with oure place.
Thinketh how nobil, as saith Valerius,
Was thilke Tullius Hostilius,
That out of povert ros to high noblesse.
Redith Senek, and redith eek Boece,
Ther schuln ye se expresse, that no dred is,
That he is gentil that doth gentil dedis.
And therfor, lieve housbond, I conclude,
Al were it that myn auncetres wer rude,

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Yit may the highe God, and so hope I,
Graunte me grace to lyve vertuously;
Than am I gentil, whan that I bygynne
To lyve vertuously, and weyven synne.
And ther as ye of povert me repreve,
The heighe God, on whom that we bilieve,
In wilful povert ches to *lede* his lif;
And certes, every man, mayden, or wyf,
May understonde that Jhesus, heven king,
Ne wolde not chese a vicious lyvyng.
Glad povert is an honest thing certayn;
This wol Senek and other clerkes sayn.
Who that holt him payd of his povert,
I hold him riche, al had he nought a schert.
He that coveitith is a pore wight,
For he wold have that is not in his might.
But he that nought hath, ne coveyteth nought to have,
Is riche, although ye hold him but a knave;
Verray povert is synne proprely.
"Juvenal saith of povert merily,
The pore man whan he goth by the waye
Bifore the theves he may synge and playe.
Povert is hatel *good*, and, as I gesse,
A ful gret brynger out of busynesse;
A gret amender eek of sapiens
To him that takith it in paciens.
Povert is this, although it seme elenge,
Possessioun that no wight wil chalenge.
Povert, ful often, whan a man is lowe,
Makith him his God and eek himself to knowe.
Povert a spectacle is, as thinkith me,
Thurgh which he may his verray frendes se;
And therfor, sir, syth that I yow nought greve,
Of my povert no more ye me repreve.
"Now, sir, of elde ye repreve me;
And certes, sir, though noon auctorité
Were in no book, ye gentils of honour
Sayn that men schuld an old wight doon favour,
And clepe him fader, for your gentilesse;
And *auctours* I schal fynden, as I gesse.
"Now ther that ye sayn I am foul and old,
Than drede you nought to ben a cokewold.
For filthe and elde, al-so mot I the,
Ben grete wardeyns upon chastité.
But natheles, sith I knowe your delyt,
I schal fulfille youre worldly appetyt.

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Chese, now," quod sche, "oon of these thinges tweye,
To have me foul and old til that I deye,
And be to yow a trewe *and* humble wyf,
And never yow displease in al my lyf;
Or elles ye wol have me yong and fair,
And take your aventure of the repair
That schal be to your hous bycause of me,
Or in som other place *it* may wel be.
Now chese yourselven whethir that yow liketh."
This knight avysith him, and sore sikith,
But atte last he sayd in this manere:
"My lady and my love, and wyf so deere,
I putte me in your wyse governaunce,
Chesith yourself which may be most pleasaunce
And most honour to yow and me also,
I do no fors the whether of the tuo,
For as yow likith, it suffisith me."
"Than have I gete of yow the maystry," quod sche,
"Sith I may govern and chese as me list?"
"Ye certes, wyf," quod he, "I hold it best."
"Kys me," quod sche, "we ben no lenger wrothe,
For, by my trouthe, I wol be to yow bothe,
That is to saye, ye, bothe fair and good.
I pray to God that I mot sterve wood;
But I be to yow al-so good and trewe
As ever was wyf, siththen the world was newe;
And but I be to morow as fair to seen
As eny lady, emperesse, or queen,
That is bitwixe thest and eek the west,
Doth by my lyf right even as you lest.
Cast up the cortyns, and look what this is."
And whan the knyght saugh verrayly al this,
That sche so fair was, and so yong therto,
For joye he hent hir in his armes tuo;
His herte bathid in a bath of blisse,
A thousand tyme on rowe he gan hir kisse.
And sche obeyed him in every thing
That mighte doon him pleisauns or likyng.
And thus thay lyve unto her lyves end
In parfyt joye; and Jhesu Crist us sende
Housbondes meke, yonge, and freissche on bedde,
And grace to overbyde hem that we wedde.
And eek I pray to Jhesus schort her lyves,
That wil nought be governed after her wyves.
And old and angry nygardes of dispense,
God send hem sone verray pestilence!

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EDITOR'S PREFACE TO THE TRANSLATIONS.

THE reader has had before him in the Preface to the Fables, and will have before him in the Prefaces contained in this and the two following volumes, so abundant and various an exposition of Dryden's general ideas on Translation, that it is hardly necessary to attempt anything more than the briefest summary of them here. All that is necessary for intelligent perusal is to remember that the poet again and again disclaims an attempt at what is now called *fidelity;* that he aims, though with varying range of licence, at a paraphrase rather than at a translation; and that, on the whole, he may be said to provide a poem in his own style, but on the author's theme and with the author's details, rather than a poem in the author's style but in a different language. The Virgil is somewhat less lax than most of the others; but the characteristics of each will, where it is necessary, be indicated in their place.

This system of Dryden's makes it at once unnecessary and impossible to annotate his

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Translations as if they were written from the point of view of the scholar. An equal proportion of notes and text would hardly suffice to point out his verbal variations, omissions, and additions, while an attempt to account for any of the three classes would, save in very rare instances, be labour wholly lost. This of itself constitutes the strongest reason for reprobating the presumptuous folly of those who, especially in the Virgil, have altered Dryden's text because, forsooth, it did not seem to them to be a correct translation. Scott's partial condescension to this folly, though a mistake, was, it need hardly be said, founded on no presumption, but the reverse: his modest consciousness of a deficient acquaintance with the learned languages leading him to defer to those who had such learning. All such miscorrections have been recorrected (oversights of course excepted) in the present edition; the readers of which, it may be hoped, agree with the Editor in wishing to read what Dryden wrote, and not what some forgotten pedant thought that Dryden should have written. Those who want a literal and scholarly version, either of Virgil or of any other classical poet, will not be likely to come to Dryden at all. Besides these presumptuous sins, there are others in Scott's text which had to be corrected, the origin of which is less obvious. Scott has occasionally dropped clauses, sentences, and

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even paragraphs, especially in the prefaces, which is the more remarkable that he had Malone, a very careful editor, before him.

To conclude, the perusal of Dryden's Translations is full of interest even to those who care little for translations in general. For, in the first place, they abound with examples of his most characteristic and vigorous work; and, in the second, their originals will be found to have furnished not a few of the most striking thoughts and phrases to be found in his original poems. Nothing is more noteworthy in Dryden's literary character than the way in which one part of his occupation fed, so to speak, and sustained the other. It may be added that Scott, for convenience' sake, has classed all the translations from one author together, regardless of chronological order and the books in which they first appeared. The argument of convenience still applies, and that of accuracy is sufficiently met by appending the place of original publication to the title of each piece in the Contents.

G. S.

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TRANSLATIONS

FROM

OVID'S EPISTLES.

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PREFACE

TO THE

TRANSLATION OF OVID'S EPISTLES.*

THE Life of Ovid being already written in our language, before the translation of his *Metamorphoses*, I will not presume so far upon myself, to think I can add any thing to Mr Sandys his undertaking.† The English reader may there be

* Published in 8vo, in 1680. This version was made by several hands. See introductory remarks on Dryden's Translations [*Life*, Section VIII.]. Johnson gives the following account of the purpose of Dryden's Preface:—

"In 1680, the Epistles of Ovid being translated by the poets of the time, it was necessary (says Dr Johnson) to introduce them by a preface; and Dryden, who on such occasions was regularly summoned, prefixed a discourse upon translation, which was then struggling for the liberty it now enjoys. Why it should find any difficulty in breaking the shackles of verbal interpretation, which must for ever debar it from elegance, it would be difficult to conjecture, were not the power of prejudice every day observed. The authority of Jonson, Sandys, and Holiday had fixed the judgment of the nation; and it was not easily believed that a better way could be found than they had taken, though Fanshaw, Denham, Waller, and Cowley had tried to give examples of a different practice."

† George Sandys's Translation of Ovid was published in folio, in 1626.

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satisfied, that he flourished in the reign of Augustus Cæsar; that he was extracted from an ancient family of Roman knights; that he was born to the inheritance of a splendid fortune;* that he was designed to the study of the law, and had made considerable progress in it, before he quitted that profession, for this of poetry, to which he was more naturally formed. The cause of his banishment is unknown; because he was himself unwilling further to provoke the emperor, by ascribing it to any other reason than what was pretended by Augustus, which was, the lasciviousness of his *Elegies*, and his *Art of Love*.† It is true, they are not to be excused in the severity of manners, as being able to corrupt a larger empire, if there were any, than that of Rome; yet this may be said in behalf of Ovid, that no man has ever treated the passion of love with so much delicacy of thought, and of expression, or searched into the nature of it more philosophically than he. And the emperor, who condemned him, had as little reason as another man to punish that fault with so much severity,

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* Ovid was born in the year of Rome 711, and died in 771 of the same era.

† The poet himself plainly intimates as much in an epistle to Fabius Maximus, where he represents himself as accusing Love of being the cause of his exile:—

O puer! exilii decepto causa magistro.

The deity replies to this charge, by alluding to the secret cause of his banishment, for which the looseness of his verses furnished only an ostensible reason:—

——————— *Juro* ———

Nil nisi concessum nos te didicisse magistro,
Artibus et nullum crimen inesse tuis,
Utque hoc, sic utinam cetera defendere possis,
Scis aliud quod te læserit esse magis.

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if at least he were the author of a certain epigram, which is ascribed to him, relating to the cause of the first civil war betwixt himself and Mark Antony the Triumvir, which is more fulsome than any passage I have met with in our poet.* To pass by the naked familiarity of his expressions to Horace, which are cited in that author's life, I need only mention one notorious act of his, in taking Livia to his bed, when she was not only married, but with child by her husband then living. But deeds, it seems, may be justified by arbitrary power, when words are questioned in a poet. There is another guess of the grammarians, as far from truth as the first from reason; they will have him banished for some favours, which they say he received from Julia, the daughter of Augustus, whom they think he celebrates under the name of Corinna in his *Elegies;* but he who will observe the verses which are made to that mistress, may gather from the whole contexture of them, that Corinna was not a woman of the highest quality. If Julia were then married to Agrippa, why should our poet make his petition to Isis for her safe delivery, and afterwards condole her miscarriage; which, for aught he knew, might be by her own husband? Or, indeed, how durst he be so bold to make the least discovery of such a crime, which was no less than capital, especially committed against a person of Agrippa's rank? Or, if it were before her marriage, he would surely have been more discreet, than to have published an accident which must have been fatal to them both. But what most confirms me against this opinion, is, that Ovid himself complains, that the true person of Corinna was found out by the

* Martial, lib. xi. Epig. 21.

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fame of his verses to her; which if it had been Julia, he durst not have owned; and, beside, an immediate punishment must have followed. He seems himself more truly to have touched at the cause of his exile in those obscure verses:—

Cur aliquid vidi? cur noxia lumina feci?
Cur imprudenti cognita culpa mihi est?
Inscius Actæon vidit sine veste Dianam,
Præda fuit canibus non minus ille suis.

Namely, that he had either seen, or was conscious to somewhat, which had procured him his disgrace. But neither am I satisfied, that this was the incest of the emperor with his own daughter: for Augustus was of a nature too vindictive to have contented himself with so small a revenge, or so unsafe to himself, as that of simple banishment, and would certainly have secured his crimes from public notice, by the death of him who was witness to them. Neither have historians given us any sight into such an action of this emperor: nor would he (the greatest politician of his time), in all probability, have managed his crimes with so little secrecy, as not to shun the observation of any man. It seems more probable, that Ovid was either the confidant of some other passion, or that he had stumbled, by some inadvertency, upon the privacies of Livia, and seen her in a bath: for the words

Sine veste Dianam,

agree better with Livia, who had the fame of chastity, than with either of the Julias, who were both noted of incontinency. The first verses, which were made by him in his youth, and recited publicly, according to the custom, were, as he himself assures us, to Corinna: his banishment happened not till the age of fifty; from which it may be

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deduced, with probability enough, that the love of Corinna did not occasion it: nay, he tells us plainly, that his offence was that of error only, not of wickedness; and in the same paper of verses also, that the cause was notoriously known at Rome, though it be left so obscure to after ages.*

But to leave conjectures on a subject so uncertain,† and to write somewhat more authentic of this poet. That he frequented the court of Augustus, and was well received in it, is most undoubted: all his poems bear the character of a court, and appear to be written, as the French call it, *cavalièrement:* add to this, that the titles of many of his elegies, and more of his letters in his banishment, are addressed to persons well known to us, even at this distance, to have been considerable in that court.

Nor was his acquaintance less with the famous poets of his age, than with the noblemen and ladies. He tells you himself, in a particular account of his own life, that Macer, Horace, Tibullus,‡ Propertius, and many others of them, were his familiar friends, and that some of them communicated their writings to him; but that he had only seen Virgil.

If the imitation of nature be the business of a

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* *Causa meæ cunctis nimium quoque nota ruinæ,*
Indicio non est testificanda meo.

† This curious and obscure subject is minutely investigated by Bayle, who quotes and confutes the various opinions of the learned concerning this point of secret history, and concludes, like Dryden, by leaving it very much where he found it. Were I to hazard a conjecture, I should rather think, with our poet, Ovid had made some imprudent, and perhaps fortuitous, discovery relating to Livia.

‡ Dryden speaks inaccurately, from a general recollection of the passage; for Ovid says distinctly, that the Fates did

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poet, I know no author, who can justly be compared with ours, especially in the description of the passions. And to prove this, I shall need no other judges than the generality of his readers: for, all passions being inborn with us, we are almost equally judges, when we are concerned in the representation of them. Now I will appeal to any man, who has read this poet, whether he finds not the natural emotion of the same passion in himself, which the poet describes in his feigned persons? His thoughts, which are the pictures and results of those passions, are generally such as naturally arise from those disorderly motions of our spirits. Yet, not to speak too partially in his behalf, I will confess, that the copiousness of his wit was such, that he often writ too pointedly for his subject, and made his persons speak more eloquently than the violence of their passion would admit: so that he is frequently witty out of season; leaving the imitation of nature, and the cooler dictates of his judgment, for the false applause of fancy. Yet he seems to have found out this imperfection in his riper age; for why else should he complain that his *Metamorphoses* was left unfinished? Nothing sure can be added to the

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not give him time to cultivate the acquaintance of Tibullus, any more than of Virgil. The entire passage runs thus:—

Temporis illius colui, fovique poetas:
Quotque aderant vates, rebar adesse deos.
Sæpe suas volucres legit mihi grandior ævo,
Quæque necet serpens, quæ juvet herba, Macer.
Sæpe suos solitus recitare Propertius ignes,
Jure sodalitii qui mihi junctus erat.
Ponticus Heroo, Battus quoque clarus Iambo,
Dulcia convictus membra fuere mei.
Et tenuit nostras numerosus Horatius aures
Dum ferit Ausoniâ carmina culta lyrâ.
Virgilium vidi tantum; nec avara Tibullo
Tempus amicitiæ fata dedere meæ.
Trist. lib. iv. Eleg. 10.

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wit of that poem, or of the rest; but many things ought to have been retrenched, which I suppose would have been the business of his age, if his misfortunes had not come too fast upon him. But take him uncorrected, as he is transmitted to us, and it must be acknowledged, in spite of his Dutch friends, the commentators, even of Julius Scaliger himself, that Seneca's censure will stand good against him—

Nescivit quod bene cessit relinquere:

he never knew how to give over, when he had done well; but, continually varying the same sense an hundred ways, and taking up in another place what he had more than enough inculcated before, he sometimes cloys his readers, instead of satisfying them; and gives occasion to his translators, who dare not cover him, to blush at the nakedness of their father. This, then, is the allay of Ovid's writings, which is sufficiently recompensed by his other excellences: nay, this very fault is not without its beauties; for the most severe censor cannot but be pleased with the prodigality of his wit, though at the same time he could have wished that the master of it had been a better manager. Every thing which he does becomes him; and if sometimes he appears too gay, yet there is a secret gracefulness of youth, which accompanies his writings, though the staidness and sobriety of age be wanting. In the most material part, which is the conduct, it is certain, that he seldom has miscarried: for if his *Elegies* be compared with those of Tibullus and Propertius, his contemporaries, it will be found that those poets seldom designed before they writ; and though the language of Tibullus be more polished, and the learning of Propertius, especially in his

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fourth book, more set out to ostentation; yet their common practice was to look no further before them than the next line; whence it will inevitably follow, that they can drive to no certain point, but ramble from one subject to another, and conclude with somewhat, which is not of a piece with their beginning—

Purpureus latè qui splendeat, unus et alter
Assuitur pannus,———

as Horace says; though the verses are golden, they are but patched into the garment. But our poet has always the goal in his eye, which directs him in his race; some beautiful design, which he first establishes, and then contrives the means, which will naturally conduct it to his end. This will be evident to judicious readers in his *Epistles*, of which somewhat, at least in general, will be expected.

The title of them in our late editions is *Epistolæ Heroidum*, the Letters of the Heroines. But Heinsius has judged more truly, that the inscription of our author was barely Epistles; which he concludes from his cited verses, where Ovid asserts this work as his own invention, and not borrowed from the Greeks, whom (as the masters of their learning) the Romans usually did imitate. But it appears not from their writings, that any of the Grecians ever touched upon this way, which our poet therefore justly has vindicated to himself. I quarrel not at the word *Heroidum*, because it is used by Ovid in his *Art of Love*—

Jupiter ad veteres supplex Heroidas *ibat.*

But, sure, he could not be guilty of such an oversight, to call his work by the name of *Heroines*, when there are divers men, or heroes, as, namely,

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Paris, Leander, and Acontius, joined in it. Except Sabinus, who writ some answers to Ovid's Letters,

(*Quam celer è toto rediit meus orbe Sabinus,*)

I remember not any of the Romans, who have treated this subject, save only Propertius, and that but once, in his Epistle of Arethusa to Lycotas, which is written so near the style of Ovid, that it seems to be but an imitation; and therefore ought not to defraud our poet of the glory of his invention.

Concerning this work of the *Epistles*, I shall content myself to observe these few particulars: first, that they are generally granted to be the most perfect pieces of Ovid, and that the style of them is tenderly passionate and courtly; two properties well agreeing with the persons, which were heroines, and lovers. Yet, where the characters were lower, as in Œnone and Hero, he has kept close to nature, in drawing his images after a country life, though perhaps he has Romanised his Grecian dames too much, and made them speak, sometimes, as if they had been born in the city of Rome, and under the empire of Augustus. There seems to be no great variety in the particular subjects which he has chosen; most of the *Epistles* being written from ladies, who were forsaken by their lovers: which is the reason that many of the same thoughts come back upon us in divers letters: but of the general character of women, which is modesty, he has taken a most becoming care; for his amorous expressions go no further than virtue may allow, and therefore may be read, as he intended them, by matrons without a blush.

Thus much concerning the poet, whom you

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find translated by divers hands, that you may at least have that variety in the English which the subject denied to the author of the Latin: it remains that I should say somewhat of poetical translations in general, and give my opinion (with submission to better judgments), which way of version seems to be the most proper.

All translation, I suppose, may be reduced to these three heads.

First, that of metaphrase, or turning an author word by word, and line by line, from one language into another. Thus, or near this manner, was Horace his *Art of Poetry* translated by Ben Jonson. The second way is that of paraphrase, or translation with latitude, where the author is kept in view by the translator, so as never to be lost, but his words are not so strictly followed as his sense; and that too is admitted to be amplified, but not altered. Such is Mr. Waller's translation of Virgil's fourth Æneid. The third way is that of imitation, where the translator (if now he has not lost that name) assumes the liberty, not only to vary from the words and sense, but to forsake them both as he sees occasion; and, taking only some general hints from the original, to run divisions on the ground-work, as he pleases. Such is Mr. Cowley's practice in turning two Odes of Pindar, and one of Horace, into English.

Concerning the first of these methods, our master Horace has given us this caution—

> *Nec verbum verbo curabis reddere, fidus*
> *Interpres*———
>
> Nor word for word too faithfully translate;

as the Earl of Roscommon has excellently rendered it. Too faithfully is, indeed, pedantically: it is a faith like that which proceeds from

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superstition, blind and zealous. Take it in the expression of Sir John Denham to Sir Richard Fanshaw, on his version of the *Pastor Fido*:—

> That servile path thou nobly dost decline,
> Of tracing word by word, and line by line:
> A new and nobler way thou dost pursue,
> To make translations and translators too:
> They but preserve the ashes, thou the flame,
> True to his sense, but truer to his fame.

It is almost impossible to translate verbally, and well, at the same time; for the Latin (a most severe and compendious language) often expresses that in one word, which either the barbarity, or the narrowness, of modern tongues cannot supply in more. It is frequent, also, that the conceit is couched in some expression, which will be lost in English:—

Atque iidem venti vela fidemque ferent.

What poet of our nation is so happy as to express this thought literally in English, and to strike wit, or almost sense, out of it?

In short, the verbal copier is encumbered with so many difficulties at once, that he can never disentangle himself from all. He is to consider, at the same time, the thought of his author, and his words, and to find out the counterpart to each in another language; and, besides this, he is to confine himself to the compass of numbers, and the slavery of rhyme. It is much like dancing on ropes with fettered legs: a man may shun a fall by using caution; but the gracefulness of motion is not to be expected: and when we have said the best of it, it is but a foolish task; for no sober man would put himself into a danger for the applause of escaping without breaking his neck. We see Ben Jonson could

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not avoid obscurity in his literal translation of Horace, attempted in the same compass of lines: nay, Horace himself could scarce have done it to a Greek poet:—

Brevis esse laboro, obscurus fio:

either perspicuity or gracefulness will frequently be wanting. Horace has indeed avoided both these rocks in his translation of the three first lines of Homer's *Odyssey*, which he has contracted into two:—

Dic mihi, musa virum, captæ post tempora Trojæ,
Qui mores hominum multorum vidit, et urbes.

Muse, speak the man, who, since the siege of Troy,
So many towns, such change of manners saw.

ROSCOMMON.

But then the sufferings of Ulysses, which are a considerable part of that sentence, are omitted:—

Ὃς μάλα πολλὰ πλάγχθη.

The consideration of these difficulties, in a servile, literal translation, not long since made two of our famous wits, Sir John Denham* and Mr. Cowley, to contrive another way of turning authors into our tongue, called, by the latter of them, imitation. As they were friends, I suppose they communicated their thoughts on this subject

* Sir John Denham gives his opinion on this subject in the preface to *The Destruction of Troy*, which he does not venture to call a translation, but "an Essay on the second book of Virgil's *Æneis*:"—"I conceive it is a vulgar error, in translating poets, to affect being *fidus interpres*; let that care be with them who deal in matters of fact, or matters of faith; but whosoever aims at it in poetry, as he attempts what is not required, so he shall never perform what he attempts: for it is not his business alone to translate language into language, but poesy into poesy; and poesy is of so subtile a spirit, that,

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to each other; and therefore their reasons for it are little different, though the practice of one is much more moderate. I take imitation of an author, in their sense, to be an endeavour of a later poet to write like one who has written before him, on the same subject; that is, not to translate his words, or to be confined to his sense, but only to set him as a pattern, and to write, as he supposes that author would have done, had he lived in our age, and in our country. Yet I dare not say, that either of them have carried this libertine way of rendering authors (as Mr. Cowley calls it) so far as my definition reaches; for, in the Pindaric odes, the customs and ceremonies of ancient Greece are still preserved. But I know not what mischief may arise hereafter from the example of such an innovation, when writers of unequal parts to him shall imitate so bold an undertaking. To add and to diminish what we please, which is the way avowed by him, ought only to be granted to Mr. Cowley, and that too only in his translation of Pindar; because he alone was able to make him amends, by giving him better of his own, whenever he refused his author's thoughts. Pindar is generally known to be a dark writer, to want connection, (I mean as to our understanding,) to soar out of sight, and leave his reader at

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in the pouring out of one language into another, it will all evaporate; and if a new spirit be not added in the transfusion, there will remain nothing but a *caput mortuum*, there being certain graces and happinesses peculiar to every language, which give life and energy to the words; and whosoever offers at verbal translation, shall have the misfortune of that young traveller, who lost his own language abroad, and brought home no other instead of it; for the grace of the Latin will be lost by being turned into English words, and the grace of the English by being turned into the Latin phrase."

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a gaze. So wild and ungovernable a poet cannot be translated literally; his genius is too strong to bear a chain, and, Samson-like, he shakes it off. A genius so elevated and unconfined as Mr. Cowley's, was but necessary to make Pindar speak English, and that was to be performed by no other way than imitation.* But if Virgil, or Ovid, or any regular intelligible authors, be thus used, it is no longer to be called their work, when neither the thoughts nor words are drawn from the original; but instead of them there is something new produced, which is almost the creation of another hand. By this way, it is true, somewhat that is excellent may be invented, perhaps more excellent than the first design; though

* Cowley is now so undeservedly forgotten, that it is not superfluous to insert his own excellent account of the free mode of translation prefixed to his translations from Pindar: "If a man should undertake to translate Pindar, word for word, it would be thought that one madman had translated another; as may appear, when he that understands not the original, reads the verbal traduction of him into Latin prose, than which nothing seems more raving. And sure rhyme, without the addition of wit, and the spirit of poetry, (*quod nequeo monstrare et sentio tantum,*) would but make it ten times more distracted than it is in prose. We must consider, in Pindar, the great difference of time betwixt his age and ours, which changes, as in pictures, at least the colours of poetry; the no less difference betwixt the religions and customs of our countries, and a thousand particularities of places, persons, and manners, which do but confusedly appear to our eyes at so great a distance; and, lastly, (which were enough, alone, for my purpose,) we must consider, that our ears are strangers to the music of his numbers, which sometimes, (especially in songs and odes,) almost without anything else, makes an excellent poet. For though the grammarians and critics have laboured to reduce his verses into regular feet and measures, (as they have also those of the Greek and Latin comedies,) yet, in effect, they are little better than prose to our ears: and I would gladly know what applause our best pieces of English poesy could expect from

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Virgil must be still excepted, when that perhaps takes place. Yet he who is inquisitive to know an author's thoughts, will be disappointed in his expectation; and it is not always that a man will be contented to have a present made him, when he expects the payment of a debt. To state it fairly; imitation of an author is the most advantageous way for a translator to show himself, but the greatest wrong which can be done to the memory and reputation of the dead. Sir John Denham (who advised more liberty than he took himself) gives his reason for his innovation, in his admirable preface before the translation of the second Æneid: "Poetry is of so subtile a spirit, that, in pouring out of one language into another,

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a Frenchman or Italian, if converted faithfully, and word for word, into French and Italian prose. And when we have considered all this, we must needs confess, that after all these losses sustained by Pindar, all we can add to him by our wit and invention, (not deserting still his subject,) is not like to make him a richer man than he was in his own country. This is, in some measure, to be applied to all translations; and the not observing of it is the cause, that all which ever I yet saw are so much inferior to their originals. The like happens, too, in pictures, from the same root of exact imitation; which being a vile and unworthy kind of servitude, is incapable of producing anything good or noble. I have seen originals, both in painting and poesy, much more beautiful than their natural objects; but I never saw a copy better than the original: which indeed cannot be otherwise; for men resolving in no case to shoot beyond the mark, it is a thousand to one if they shoot not short of it. It does not at all trouble me, that the grammarians, perhaps, will not suffer this libertine way of rendering foreign authors to be called translation; for I am not so much enamoured of the name translator, as not to wish rather to be something better, though it wants yet a name. I speak not so much all this in defence of my manner of translating or imitating (or what other title they please,) the two ensuing odes of Pindar, for that would not deserve half these words, as by this occasion to rectify the opinion of divers men upon this matter."

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it will all evaporate; and, if a new spirit be not added in the transfusion, there will remain nothing but a *caput mortuum*." I confess this argument holds good against a literal translation; but who defends it? Imitation and verbal version are, in my opinion, the two extremes which ought to be avoided; and therefore, when I have proposed the mean betwixt them, it will be seen how far his argument will reach.

No man is capable of translating poetry, who, besides a genius to that art, is not a master both of his author's language, and of his own; nor must we understand the language only of the poet, but his particular turn of thoughts and expression, which are the characters that distinguish, and as it were individuate him from all other writers. When we are come thus far, it is time to look into ourselves, to conform our genius to his, to give his thought either the same turn, if our tongue will bear it, or, if not, to vary but the dress, not to alter or destroy the substance. The like care must be taken of the more outward ornaments, the words. When they appear (which is but seldom) literally graceful, it were an injury to the author that they should be changed. But, since every language is so full of its own proprieties, that what is beautiful in one, is often barbarous, nay sometimes nonsense, in another, it would be unreasonable to limit a translator to the narrow compass of his author's words: it is enough if he choose out some expression which does not vitiate the sense. I suppose he may stretch his chain to such a latitude; but, by innovation of thoughts, methinks, he breaks it. By this means the spirit of an author may be transfused, and yet not lost: and thus it is plain, that the reason alleged by Sir

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John Denham has no further force than to expression; for thought, if it be translated truly, cannot be lost in another language; but the words that convey it to our apprehension (which are the image and ornament of that thought,) may be so ill chosen, as to make it appear in an unhandsome dress, and rob it of its native lustre. There is, therefore, a liberty to be allowed for the expression; neither is it necessary that words and lines should be confined to the measure of their original. The sense of an author, generally speaking, is to be sacred and inviolable. If the fancy of Ovid be luxuriant, it is his character to be so; and if I retrench it, he is no longer Ovid. It will be replied, that he receives advantage by this lopping of his superfluous branches; but I rejoin, that a translator has no such right. When a painter copies from the life, I suppose he has no privilege to alter features, and lineaments, under pretence that his picture will look better: perhaps the face, which he has drawn, would be more exact, if the eyes or nose were altered; but it is his business to make it resemble the original. In two cases only there may a seeming difficulty arise; that is, if the thought be notoriously trivial, or dishonest; but the same answer will serve for both, that then they ought not to be translated:—

———*Et quæ*
Desperes tractata nitescere posse, relinquas.

Thus I have ventured to give my opinion on this subject against the authority of two great men, but I hope without offence to either of their memories; for I both loved them living, and reverence them now they are dead. But if, after what I have urged, it be thought by better

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judges, that the praise of a translation consists in adding new beauties to the piece, thereby to recompense the loss which it sustains by change of language, I shall be willing to be taught better, and to recant. In the meantime, it seems to me that the true reason why we have so few versions which are tolerable, is not from the too close pursuing of the author's sense, but because there are so few who have all the talents which are requisite for translation, and that there is so little praise, and so small encouragement, for so considerable a part of learning.*

To apply, in short, what has been said to this present work, the reader will here find most of the Translations with some little latitude or variation from the author's sense. That of Œnone to Paris is in Mr. Cowley's way of imitation only. I was desired to say that the author,† who is of the fair sex, understood not Latin.

But if she does not, I am afraid she has given us occasion to be ashamed who do.

For my own part, I am ready to acknowledge that I have transgressed the rules which I have given; and taken more liberty than a just translation will allow. But so many gentlemen, whose wit and learning are well known, being joined in it, I doubt not but that their excellences will make you ample satisfaction for my errors.

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* [Scott omits the rest, as also the phrase, on p. 16, about "several hands" and "variety of English." I do not know whom he followed in this, which seems unjustifiable, and is certainly not excused by the fact that the other "hands" do not appear. Malone duly gives both.—Ed.]

† [Aphra Behn.—Ed.]

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CANACE TO MACAREUS.

EPIST. XI.

THE ARGUMENT.

Macareus and Canace, son and daughter to Æolus, God of the Winds, loved each other incestuously: Canace was delivered of a son, and committed him to her nurse, to be secretly conveyed away. The infant crying out, by that means was discovered to Æolus, who, enraged at the wickedness of his children, commanded the babe to be exposed to wild beasts on the mountains; and withal, sent a sword to Canace, with this message, That her crimes would instruct her how to use it. With this sword she slew herself; but before she died, she writ the following letter to her brother Macareus, who had taken sanctuary in the temple of Apollo.

If streaming blood my fatal letter stain,
Imagine, ere you read, the writer slain;
One hand the sword, and one the pen employs,
And in my lap the ready paper lies.
Think in this posture thou behold'st me write;
In this my cruel father would delight.
O! were he present, that his eyes and hands
Might see, and urge the death which he commands!
Than all the raging winds more dreadful, he,
Unmoved, without a tear, my wounds would see.

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Jove justly placed him on a stormy throne,
His people's temper is so like his own.
The north and south, and each contending blast,
Are underneath his wide dominion cast:
Those he can rule; but his tempestuous mind
Is, like his airy kingdom, unconfined.
Ah! what avail my kindred Gods above,
That in their number I can reckon Jove!
What help will all my heavenly friends afford,
When to my breast I lift the pointed sword?
That hour, which joined us, came before its time;
In death we had been one without a crime.
Why did thy flames beyond a brother's move?
Why loved I thee with more than sister's love?
For I loved too; and, knowing not my wound,
A secret pleasure in thy kisses found;
My cheeks no longer did their colour boast,
My food grew loathsome, and my strength I lost:
Still ere I spoke, a sigh would stop my tongue;
Short were my slumbers, and my nights were long.
I knew not from my love these griefs did grow,
Yet was, alas! the thing I did not know.
My wily nurse, by long experience, found,
And first discovered to my soul its wound.
"'Tis love," said she; and then my downcast eyes,
And guilty dumbness, witnessed my surprise.
Forced at the last my shameful pain I tell;
And oh, what followed, we both know too well!
"When half denying, more than half content,
Embraces warmed me to a full consent,
Then with tumultuous joys my heart did beat,
And guilt, that made them anxious, made them great." *

* These lines are original [and so are the quotation marks. —Ed.]

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But now my swelling womb heaved up my breast,
And rising weight my sinking limbs opprest.
What herbs, what plants, did not my nurse produce,
To make abortion by their powerful juice!
What medicines tried we not, to thee unknown!
Our first crime common; this was mine alone.
But the strong child, secure in his dark cell,
With nature's vigour did our arts repel.
And now the pale-faced empress of the night
Nine times had filled her orb with borrowed light;
Not knowing 'twas my labour, I complain
Of sudden shootings, and of grinding pain;
My throes came thicker, and my cries increased,
Which with her hand the conscious nurse suppressed.
To that unhappy fortune was I come,
Pain urged my clamours, but fear kept me dumb.
With inward struggling I restrained my cries,
And drunk the tears that trickled from my eyes.
Death was in sight, Lucina gave no aid,
And even my dying had my guilt betrayed.
Thou cam'st, and in thy countenance sat despair;
Rent were thy garments all, and torn thy hair;
Yet feigning comfort, which thou couldst not give,
Prest in thy arms, and whispering me to live;
For both our sakes, said'st thou, "Preserve thy life;
Live, my dear sister, and my dearer wife."
Raised by that name, with my last pangs I strove;
Such power have words, when spoke by those we love.
The babe, as if he heard what thou hadst sworn,
With hasty joy sprung forward to be born.

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What helps it to have weathered out one storm!
Fear of our father does another form.
High in his hall, rocked in a chair of state,
The king with his tempestuous council sate;
Through this large room our only passage lay,
By which we could the new-born babe convey.
Swathed in her lap, the bold nurse bore him out,
With olive branches covered round about;
And, muttering prayers, as holy rites she meant,
Through the divided crowd unquestioned went.
Just at the door the unhappy infant cried;
The grandsire heard him, and the theft he spied.
Swift as a whirlwind to the nurse he flies,
And deafs his stormy subjects with his cries.
With one fierce puff he blows the leaves away;
Exposed the self-discovered infant lay.
The noise reached me, and my presaging mind
Too soon its own approaching woes divined.
Not ships at sea with winds are shaken more,
Nor seas themselves, when angry tempests roar,
Than I, when my loud father's voice I hear;
The bed beneath me trembled with my fear.
He rushed upon me, and divulged my stain;
Scarce from my murder could his hands refrain.
I only answered him with silent tears;
They flowed; my tongue was frozen up with fears.
His little grandchild he commands away,
To mountain wolves and every bird of prey.
The babe cried out, as if he understood,
And begged his pardon with what voice he could.
By what expressions can my grief be shown?
Yet you may guess my anguish by your own,
To see my bowels, and, what yet was worse,
Your bowels too, condemned to such a curse!

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Out went the king; my voice its freedom found,
My breasts I beat, my blubbered cheeks I wound.
And now appeared the messenger of death;
Sad were his looks, and scarce he drew his breath,
To say, "Your father sends you"—(with that word
His trembling hands presented me a sword;)—
"Your father sends you this; and lets you know,
That your own crimes the use of it will show."
Too well I know the sense those words impart;
His present shall be treasured in my heart.
Are these the nuptial gifts a bride receives?
And this the fatal dower a father gives?
Thou God of marriage, shun thy own disgrace,
And take thy torch from this detested place!
Instead of that, let furies light their brands,
And fire my pile with their infernal hands!
With happier fortune may my sisters wed,
Warned by the dire example of the dead.
For thee, poor babe, what crime could they pretend?
How could thy infant innocence offend?
A guilt there was; but, oh, that guilt was mine!
Thou suffer'st for a sin that was not thine.
Thy mother's grief and crime! but just enjoyed,
Shown to my sight, and born to be destroyed!
Unhappy offspring of my teeming womb!
Dragged headlong from thy cradle to thy tomb!
Thy unoffending life I could not save,
Nor weeping could I follow to thy grave;
Nor on thy tomb could offer my shorn hair,
Nor show the grief which tender mothers bear.
Yet long thou shalt not from my arms be lost;
For soon I will o'ertake thy infant ghost.
But thou, my love, and now my love's despair,
Perform his funerals with paternal care;

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His scattered limbs with my dead body burn,
And once more join us in the pious urn.
If on my wounded breast thou dropp'st a tear,
Think for whose sake my breast that wound did
bear;
And faithfully my last desires fulfil,
As I perform my cruel father's will.

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HELEN TO PARIS.

EPIST. XVII.*

THE ARGUMENT.

Helen, having received an epistle from Paris, returns the following answer; wherein she seems at first to chide him for his presumption in writing as he had done, which could only proceed from his low opinion of her virtue; then owns herself to be sensible of the passion which he had expressed for her, though she much suspected his constancy; and at last discovers her inclination to be favourable to him; the whole letter showing the extreme artifice of womankind.

WHEN loose epistles violate chaste eyes,
She half consents, who silently denies.
How dares a stranger, with designs so vain,
Marriage and hospitable rights profane?
Was it for this, your fleet did shelter find
From swelling seas, and every faithless wind?
For though a distant country brought you forth,
Your usage here was equal to your worth.
Does this deserve to be rewarded so?
Did you come here a stranger, or a foe?

* This Epistle was partly translated by Lord Mulgrave. [It is not included in the folio published immediately after Dryden's death.—ED.]

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Your partial judgment may perhaps complain,
And think me barbarous for my just disdain;
Ill-bred then let me be, but not unchaste,
Nor my clear fame with any spot defaced.
Though in my face there 's no affected frown,
Nor in my carriage a feigned niceness shown,
I keep my honour still without a stain,
Nor has my love made any coxcomb vain.
Your boldness I with admiration see;
What hope had you to gain a queen like me?
Because a hero forced me once away,
Am I thought fit to be a second prey?
Had I been won, I had deserved your blame,
But sure my part was nothing but the shame.
Yet the base theft to him no fruit did bear,
I scaped unhurt by any thing but fear.
Rude force might some unwilling kisses gain;
But that was all he ever could obtain.
You on such terms would ne'er have let me go;
Were he like you, we had not parted so.
Untouched the youth restored me to my friends,
And modest usage made me some amends.
'Tis virtue to repent a vicious deed;
Did he repent, that Paris might succeed?
Sure 'tis some fate that sets me above wrongs,
Yet still exposes me to busy tongues.
I 'll not complain; for who 's displeased with love,
If it sincere, discreet, and constant prove?
But that I fear; not that I think you base,
Or doubt the blooming beauties of my face;
But all your sex is subject to deceive,
And ours, alas! too willing to believe.
Yet others yield; and love o'ercomes the best;
But why should I not shine above the rest?
Fair Leda's story seems at first to be
A fit example, ready formed for me.

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But she was cozened by a borrowed shape,
And under harmless feathers felt a rape.
If I should yield, what reason could I use?
By what mistake the loving crime excuse?
Her fault was in her powerful lover lost;
But of what Jupiter have I to boast?
Though you to heroes and to kings succeed,
Our famous race does no addition need;
And great alliances but useless prove,
To one that comes herself from mighty Jove.
Go then, and boast, in some less haughty place,
Your Phrygian blood, and Priam's ancient race;
Which I would show I valued, if I durst;
You are the fifth from Jove, but I the first.
The crown of Troy is powerful, I confess;
But I have reason to think ours no less.
Your letter, filled with promises of all
That men can good, and women pleasant call,
Gives expectation such an ample field,
As would move goddesses themselves to yield.
But if I e'er offend great Juno's laws,
Yourself shall be the dear, the only cause;
Either my honour I 'll to death maintain,
Or follow you, without mean thoughts of gain.
Not that so fair a present I despise;
We like the gift, when we the giver prize:
But 'tis your love moves me, which made you take
Such pains, and run such hazards for my sake.
I have perceived, though I dissembled too,
A thousand things that love has made you do.
Your eager eyes would almost dazzle mine,
In which, wild man, your wanton thoughts would shine.
Sometimes you 'd sigh, sometimes disordered stand,
And with unusual ardour press my hand;

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Contrive just after me to take the glass,
Nor would you let the least occasion pass;
When oft I feared, I did not mind alone,
And blushing sate for things which you have done;
Then murmured to myself,—"He 'll for my sake
Do any thing;"—I hope 'twas no mistake.
Oft have I read within this pleasing grove,
Under my name, those charming words,—I love.
I, frowning, seemed not to believe your flame;
But now, alas! am come to write the same.
If I were capable to do amiss,
I could not but be sensible of this.
For oh! your face has such peculiar charms,
That who can hold from flying to your arms!
But what I ne'er can have without offence,
May some blest maid possess with innocence.
Pleasure may tempt, but virtue more should move;
O learn of me to want the thing you love.
What you desire is sought by all mankind;
As you have eyes, so others are not blind.
Like you they see, like you my charms adore;
They wish not less, but you dare venture more.
Oh! had you then upon our coasts been brought,
My virgin-love when thousand rivals sought,
You had I seen, you should have had my voice,
Nor could my husband justly blame my choice.
For both our hopes, alas! you come too late;
Another now is master of my fate.
More to my wish I could have lived with you,
And yet my present lot can undergo.
Cease to solicit a weak woman's will,
And urge not her you love to so much ill;
But let me live contented as I may,
And make not my unspotted fame your prey.

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Some right you claim, since naked to your eyes
Three goddesses disputed beauty's prize;
One offered valour, t' other crowns; but she
Obtained her cause, who, smiling, promised me.
But first I am not of belief so light,
To think such nymphs would show you such a sight;
Yet granting this, the other part is feigned;
A bribe so mean your sentence had not gained.
With partial eyes I should myself regard,
To think that Venus made me her reward.
I humbly am content with human praise;
A goddess's applause would envy raise.
But be it as you say; for, 'tis confest,
The men, who flatter highest, please us best.
That I suspect it, ought not to displease;
For miracles are not believed with ease.
One joy I have, that I had Venus' voice;
A greater yet, that you confirmed her choice;
That proffered laurels, promised sovereignty,
Juno and Pallas, you contemned for me.
Am I your empire, then, and your renown?
What heart of rock, but must by this be won?
And yet bear witness, O you Powers above,
How rude I am in all the arts of love!
My hand is yet untaught to write to men;
This is the essay of my unpractised pen.
Happy those nymphs, whom use has perfect made!
I think all crime, and tremble at a shade.
E'en while I write, my fearful conscious eyes
Look often back, misdoubting a surprise.
For now the rumour spreads among the crowd,
At court in whispers, but in town aloud.
Dissemble you, whate'er you hear them say;
To leave off loving were your better way;
Yet if you will dissemble it, you may.

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Love secretly; the absence of my lord
More freedom gives, but does not all afford;
Long is his journey, long will be his stay,
Called by affairs of consequence away.
To go, or not, when unresolved he stood,
I bid him make what swift return he could;
Then kissing me, he said, "I recommend
All to thy care, but most my Trojan friend."
I smiled at what he innocently said,
And only answered, "You shall be obeyed."
Propitious winds have borne him far from hence,
But let not this secure your confidence.
Absent he is, yet absent he commands;
You know the proverb, "Princes have long hands."
My fame's my burden; for the more I 'm praised,
A juster ground of jealousy is raised.
Were I less fair, I might have been more blest;
Great beauty through great danger is possest.
To leave me here his venture was not hard,
Because he thought my virtue was my guard.
He feared my face, but trusted to my life;
The beauty doubted, but believed the wife.
You bid me use the occasion while I can,
Put in our hands by the good easy man.
I would, and yet I doubt, 'twixt love and fear;
One draws me from you, and one brings me near.
Our flames are mutual, and my husband 's gone;
The nights are long; I fear to lie alone.
One house contains us, and weak walls divide,
And you 're too pressing to be long denied.
Let me not live, but every thing conspires
To join our loves, and yet my fear retires.
You court with words, when you should force employ;
A rape is requisite to shame-faced joy.

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Indulgent to the wrongs which we receive,
Our sex can suffer what we dare not give.—
What have I said? for both of us 'twere best,
Our kindling fire if each of us supprest.
The faith of strangers is too prone to change,
And, like themselves, their wandering passions range.
Hysipyle, and the fond Minonian * maid,
Were both by trusting of their guests betrayed.
How can I doubt that other men deceive,
When you yourself did fair Œnone † leave?
But lest I should upbraid your treachery,
You make a merit of that crime to me.
Yet grant you were to faithful love inclined,
Your weary Trojans wait but for a wind;
Should you prevail, while I assign the night,
Your sails are hoisted, and you take your flight;
Some bawling mariner our love destroys,
And breaks asunder our unfinished joys.
But I with you may leave the Spartan port,
To view the Trojan wealth and Priam's court;
Shown while I see, I shall expose my fame,
And fill a foreign country with my shame.
In Asia what reception shall I find?
And what dishonour leave in Greece behind?
What will your brothers, Priam, Hecuba,
And what will all your modest matrons say?
E'en you, when on this action you reflect,
My future conduct justly may suspect;
And whate'er stranger lands upon your coast,
Conclude me, by your own example, lost.
I from your rage a strumpet's name shall hear,
While you forget what part in it you bear.

* Ariadne.

† A Phrygian nymph, seduced and deserted by Paris before his Spartan expedition.

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You, my crime's author, will my crime upbraid;—
Deep under ground, oh, let me first be laid!
You boast the pomp and plenty of your land,
And promise all shall be at my command;
Your Trojan wealth, believe me, I despise;
My own poor native land has dearer ties.
Should I be injured on your Phrygian shore,
What help of kindred could I there implore?
Medea was by Jason's flattery won;
I may, like her, believe, and be undone.
Plain honest hearts, like mine, suspect no cheat,
And love contributes to its own deceit;
The ships, about whose sides loud tempests roar,
With gentle winds were wafted from the shore.
Your teeming mother dreamed, a flaming brand,
Sprung from her womb, consumed the Trojan land;
To second this, old prophecies conspire,
That Ilium shall be burnt with Grecian fire:
Both give me fear; nor is it much allayed,
That Venus is obliged our loves to aid.
For they, who lost their cause, revenge will take;
And for one friend two enemies you make.
Nor can I doubt, but, should I follow you,
The sword would soon our fatal crime pursue.
A wrong so great my husband's rage would rouse,
And my relations would his cause espouse.
You boast your strength and courage; but, alas!
Your words receive small credit from your face.
Let heroes in the dusty field delight,
Those limbs were fashioned for another fight.
Bid Hector sally from the walls of Troy;
A sweeter quarrel should your arms employ.
Yet fears like these should not my mind perplex,
Were I as wise as many of my sex;
But time and you may bolder thoughts inspire,
And I, perhaps, may yield to your desire.

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You last demand a private conference;
These are your words, but I can guess your sense.
Your unripe hopes their harvest must attend;
Be ruled by me, and time may be your friend.
This is enough to let you understand;
For now my pen has tired my tender hand.
My woman knows the secret of my heart,
And may hereafter better news impart.

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DIDO TO ÆNEAS.

EPIST. VII.

THE ARGUMENT.

Æneas, the son of Venus and Anchises, having, at the destruction of Troy, saved his Gods, his father, and son Ascanius, from the fire, put to sea with twenty sail of ships; and, having been long tost with tempests, was at last cast upon the shore of Libya, where Queen Dido (flying from the cruelty of Pygmalion, her brother, who had killed her husband Sichæus) had lately built Carthage. She entertained Æneas and his fleet with great civility, fell passionately in love with him, and in the end denied him not the last favours. But Mercury admonishing Æneas to go in search of Italy (a kingdom promised him by the Gods), he readily prepared to follow him. Dido soon perceived it, and, having in vain tried all other means to engage him to stay, at last, in despair, writes to him as follows.

So, on Mæander's banks, when death is nigh,
The mournful swan sings her own elegy.
Not that I hope (for, oh, that hope were vain!)
By words your lost affection to regain;
But, having lost whate'er was worth my care,
Why should I fear to lose a dying prayer?
'Tis then resolved poor Dido must be left,
Of life, of honour, and of love bereft!
While you, with loosened sails, and vows, prepare
To seek a land that flies the searcher's care;

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Nor can my rising towers your flight restrain,
Nor my new empire, offered you in vain.
Built walls you shun, unbuilt you seek; that land
Is yet to conquer, but you this command.
Suppose you landed where your wish designed,
Think what reception foreigners would find,
What people is so void of common sense,
To vote succession from a native prince?
Yet there new sceptres and new loves you seek,
New vows to plight, and plighted vows to break.
When will your towers the height of Carthage know?
Or when your eyes discern such crowds below?
If such a town and subjects you could see,
Still would you want a wife who loved liked me.
For, oh! I burn, like fires with incense bright;
Not holy tapers flame with purer light.
Æneas is my thoughts' perpetual theme,
Their daily longing, and their nightly dream.
Yet he 's ungrateful and obdurate still;
Fool that I am to place my heart so ill!
Myself I cannot to myself restore;
Still I complain, and still I love him more.
Have pity, Cupid, on my bleeding heart,
And pierce thy brother's with an equal dart.
I rave; nor canst thou Venus' offspring be,
Love's mother could not bear a son like thee.
From hardened oak, or from a rock's cold womb,
At least thou art from some fierce tigress come;
Or on rough seas, from their foundation torn,
Got by the winds, and in a tempest born:
Like that, which now thy trembling sailors fear;
Like that, whose rage should still detain thee here.
Behold how high the foamy billows ride!
The winds and waves are on the juster side.

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To winter weather, and a stormy sea,
I 'll owe what rather I would owe to thee.
Death thou deserv'st from heaven's avenging laws;
But I 'm unwilling to become the cause.
To shun my love, if thou wilt seek thy fate,
'Tis a dear purchase, and a costly hate.
Stay but a little, till the tempest cease,
And the loud winds are lulled into a peace.
May all thy rage, like theirs, inconstant prove!
And so it will, if there be power in love.
Know'st thou not yet what dangers ships sustain?
So often wrecked, how darest thou tempt the main?
Which were it smooth, were every wave asleep,
Ten thousand forms of death are in the deep.
In that abyss the gods their vengeance store,
For broken vows of those who falsely swore;
There winged storms on sea-born Venus wait,
To vindicate the justice of her state.
Thus I to thee the means of safety show;
And, lost myself, would still preserve my foe.
False as thou art, I not thy death design;
O rather live, to be the cause of mine!
Should some avenging storm thy vessel tear,
(But heaven forbid my words should omen bear!)
Then in thy face thy perjured vows would fly,
And my wronged ghost be present to thy eye;
With threatening looks think thou behold'st me stare,
Gasping my mouth, and clotted all my hair.
Then, should forked lightning and red thunder fall,
What couldst thou say, but, "I deserved them all"?
Lest this should happen, make not haste away;
To shun the danger will be worth thy stay.

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Have pity on thy son, if not on me;
My death alone is guilt enough for thee.
What has his youth, what have thy gods deserved,
To sink in seas, who were from fires preserved?
But neither gods nor parent didst thou bear;
Smooth stories all, to please a woman's ear,
False as the tale of thy romantic life.
Nor yet am I thy first-deluded wife;
Left to pursuing foes Cerusa stayed,
By thee, base man, forsaken and betrayed.
This, when thou told'st me, struck my tender heart,*
That such requital followed such desert.
Nor doubt I but the gods, for crimes like these,
Seven winters kept thee wandering on the seas.
Thy starved companions, cast ashore, I fed,
Thyself admitted to my crown and bed.
To harbour strangers, succour the distrest,
Was kind enough; but, oh, too kind the rest!
Curst be the cave which first my ruin brought,
Where, from the storm, we common shelter sought!
A dreadful howling echoed round the place;
The mountain nymphs, thought I, my nuptial grace.
I thought so then, but now too late I know
The furies yelled my funerals from below.
O chastity and violated fame,
Exact your dues to my dead husband's name!
By death redeem my reputation lost,
And to his arms restore my guilty ghost!

---

* Dryden here misinterprets his author—

Hæc mihi narrâras, nec me movere———

The line would have run more justly thus—

This struck not, while thou told'st, my tender heart.

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Close by my palace, in a gloomy grove,
Is raised a chapel to my murdered love;
There, wreathed with boughs and wool, his statue stands,
The pious monument of artful hands.
Last night, methought, he called me from the dome,
And thrice, with hollow voice, cried, "Dido, come!"—
She comes; thy wife thy lawful summons hears,
But comes more slowly, clogged with conscious fears.
Forgive the wrong I offered to thy bed;
Strong were his charms, who my weak faith misled.
His goddess mother, and his aged sire
Borne on his back, did to my fall conspire.
Oh! such he was, and is, that, were he true,
Without a blush I might his love pursue;
But cruel stars my birthday did attend,
And, as my fortune opened, it must end.
My plighted lord was at the altar slain,
Whose wealth was made my bloody brother's gain;
Friendless, and followed by the murderer's hate,
To foreign countries I removed my fate;
And here, a suppliant, from the natives' hands
I bought the ground on which my city stands,
With all the coast that stretches to the sea,
E'en to the friendly port that sheltered thee;
Then raised these walls, which mount into the air,
At once my neighbours' wonder, and their fear.
For now they arm; and round me leagues are made,
My scarce established empire to invade.
To man my new-built walls I must prepare,
An helpless woman, and unskilled in war.

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Yet thousand rivals to my love pretend,
And for my person would my crown defend;
Whose jarring votes in one complaint agree,
That each unjustly is disdained for thee.
To proud Hyarbas give me up a prey,
For that must follow, if thou goest away;
Or to my husband's murderer leave my life,
That to the husband he may add the wife.
Go then, since no complaints can move thy mind;
Go, perjured man, but leave thy gods behind.
Touch not those gods, by whom thou art forsworn,
Who will in impious hands no more be borne;
Thy sacrilegious worship they disdain,
And rather would the Grecian fires sustain.
Perhaps my greatest shame is still to come,
And part of thee lies hid within my womb;
The babe unborn must perish by thy hate,
And perish, guiltless, in his mother's fate.
Some god, thou sayest, thy voyage does command;
Would the same god had barred thee from my land!
The same, I doubt not, thy departure steers,
Who kept thee out at sea so many years;
While thy long labours were a price so great,
As thou, to purchase Troy, wouldst not repeat.
But Tiber now thou seek'st, to be at best,
When there arrived, a poor precarious guest.
Yet it deludes thy search; perhaps it will
To thy old age lie undiscovered still.
A ready crown and wealth in dower I bring,
And, without conquering, here thou art a king.
Here thou to Carthage may'st transfer thy Troy;
Here young Ascanius may his arms employ;
And, while we live secure in soft repose,
Bring many laurels home from conquered foes.

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By Cupid's arrows, I adjure thee stay!
By all the gods, companions of thy way!
So may thy Trojans, who are yet alive,
Live still, and with no future fortune strive;
So may thy youthful son old age attain,
And thy dead father's bones in peace remain;
As thou hast pity on unhappy me,
Who knew no crime, but too much love of thee.
I am not born from fierce Achilles' line,
Nor did my parents against Troy combine.
To be thy wife if I unworthy prove,
By some inferior name admit my love.
To be secured of still possessing thee,
What would I do, and what would I not be!
Our Libyan coasts their certain seasons know,
When, free from tempests, passengers may go;
But now with northern blasts the billows roar,
And drive the floating sea-weed to the shore.
Leave to my care the time to sail away;
When safe, I will not suffer thee to stay.
Thy weary men would be with ease content;
Their sails are tattered, and their masts are spent.
If by no merit I thy mind can move,
What thou deniest my merit, give my love.
Stay, till I learn my loss to undergo,
And give me time to struggle with my woe:
If not, know this, I will not suffer long;
My life 's too loathsome, and my love too strong.
Death holds my pen, and dictates what I say,
While cross my lap the Trojan sword I lay.
My tears flow down; the sharp edge cuts their flood,
And drinks my sorrows, that must drink my blood.
How well thy gift does with my fate agree!
My funeral pomp is cheaply made by thee.

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To no new wounds my bosom I display;
The sword but enters where love made the way.
But thou, dear sister, and yet dearer friend,
Shalt my cold ashes to their urn attend.
Sichæus' wife let not the marble boast;
I lost that title, when my fame I lost.
This short inscription only let it bear;
"Unhappy Dido lies in quiet here.
The cause of death, and sword by which she died,
Æneas gave; the rest her arm supplied."

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TRANSLATIONS

FROM

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

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DEDICATION

PREFIXED TO THE

TRANSLATIONS FROM OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

This Dedication contains abundance of literary and political controversy. The first heat of the Revolution had been long over, and the losers began to assume the privilege of talking, without fear that an established Government would think their complaints worthy of much notice. Dryden, whom the evils of degradation and poverty pressed severely, was not of a temper to remain silent under them, as soon as he conceived it safe to utter his grievances. In losing his places of laureate and historiographer, there was not only dishonour, but great pecuniary loss; nor was it at all a soothing addition, that his old enemy Shadwell had obtained the one, and his equivocal friend Rymer the other, of his appointments. He sets out in extremely bad humour with the Government, under which he had suffered this deprivation; with those who had risen by his fall; and with himself, for having cultivated the barren field of poetry, instead of aspiring to the honours of the gown. At length, after having ventured probably as far as he thought safe, certainly as far as to excite displeasure, in flourishes of declamation, which, though expressed against ministers in general, are obviously levelled against those of the day, he turns short, and falls with great vehemence upon the whole body of critics, ancient and modern, as the natural enemies of poets and poetry. Descending to those of his own day, he singles out Rymer, who, in a piece called "A short View of Tragedy," published in 1692, had depreciated the modern drama in his deep admiration of the ancients. The controversy concerning the comparative merits of the ancients and moderns was now raging in the literary world. Perrault had written his "Parallel," and Sir William Temple his "Essay on Ancient and Modern Learning." Wotton's "Reflections" were pub-

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lished in 1694, and these led the way to Swift's "Battle of the Books," in which our author is treated with great severity.

Rymer had not only espoused the cause of the ancient tragedians in the general dispute, but, as Dryden complains, had treated him slightly; and our bard was not famous for patience under such offences. He therefore retorts in this Dedication, maliciously upbraids Rymer with the fate of his fallen tragedy "Edgar," and artfully divides the comparison between the Grecian and British dramatists, from that which Perrault had instituted between the ancient poets in general and those of modern France. Our author's good taste, as well as policy, led him to take a distinction so necessary for the maintenance of his cause. Having bestowed what he thought an adequate chastisement upon Rymer, he employs the small remainder of the Preface in discussing a few miscellaneous points of criticism, chiefly relating to translation.

The tone of this Dedication excited, as Dryden himself informs us, the resentment of the Court, who employed Rymer to attack our author's dramatic reputation,—a task which he never accomplished.*

[The Dedication is certainly ill-tempered, and no wonder, but it is brilliantly written; the occasional irregularity of construction (though it may seem to bear out Coleridge's demand for "a stricter and purer grammar"), expressing not unhappily the contemptuous indignation of the writer. To note only one thing, "the corruption of a poet is the generation of a critic," is certainly the best statement extant of a frequently restated idea. Compare with this piece the heads of an "Answer to Rymer," vol. xv.—ED.]

* See his letter to Tonson, in which he thus expresses himself: "About a fortnight ago, I had an intimation from a friend, by letter, that one of the secretaries, I suppose Trenchard, had informed the Queen that I had abused her Government, (these were his words,) in my epistle to Lord Radcliffe; and that thereupon she had commanded her historiographer to fall upon my plays, which he assures me he is now doing. I doubt not his malice, from a former hint you gave me; and if he be employed, I am confident 'tis of his own seeking, who, you know, *has spoken slightly of me in his last critique, and that gave me occasion to snarl again.*"

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DEDICATION

OF

THE THIRD MISCELLANY, 1693,

CONTAINING

TRANSLATIONS FROM OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

LORD RADCLIFFE.*

My Lord,

These Miscellany Poems are by many titles yours. The first they claim, from your acceptance of my promise to present them to you, before some of them were yet in being. The rest are derived from your own merit, the exactness

---

* Lord Radcliffe was the eldest son of Francis, Earl of Derwentwater, by Catherine, a daughter of Sir William Fenwick. He married Mary Tudor, a natural daughter of Charles II., by Mary Davies, an actress, who had the fortune to attract his Majesty's attention by singing in D'Avenant's "Rivals" the famous mad song, "My lodging is on the cold ground." Lord Radcliffe succeeded to his father in 1696-97, and died 29th April 1705.

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of your judgment in poetry, and the candour of your nature, easy to forgive some trivial faults, when they come accompanied with countervailing beauties. But, after all, though these are your equitable claims to a dedication from other poets, yet I must acknowledge a bribe in the case, which is your particular liking of my verses. It is a vanity common to all writers, to overvalue their own productions; and it is better for me to own this failing in myself, than the world to do it for me. For what other reason have I spent my life in so unprofitable a study? why am I grown old, in seeking so barren a reward as fame? The same parts and application which have made me a poet might have raised me to any honours of the gown, which are often given to men of as little learning and less honesty than myself. No Government has ever been, or ever can be, wherein timeservers and blockheads will not be uppermost. The persons are only changed, but the same jugglings in State, the same hypocrisy in religion, the same self-interest and mismanagement, will remain for ever. Blood and money will be lavished in all ages, only for the preferment of new faces, with old consciences. There is too often a jaundice in the eyes of great men; they see not those whom they raise in the same colours with other men. All whom they affect look golden to them, when the gilding is only in their own distempered sight. These considerations have given me a kind of contempt for those who have risen by unworthy ways. I am not ashamed to be little, when I see them so infamously great; neither do I know why the name of poet should be dishonourable to me, if I am truly one, as I hope I am; for I will never do any thing that shall dishonour it. The notions of morality are

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known to all men; none can pretend ignorance of those ideas which are inborn in mankind; and if I see one thing, and practise the contrary, I must be disingenuous not to acknowledge a clear truth, and base to act against the light of my own conscience. For the reputation of my honesty, no man can question it, who has any of his own; for that of my poetry, it shall either stand by its own merit, or fall for want of it. Ill writers are usually the sharpest censors; for they, as the best poet and the best patron said,

> When in the full perfection of decay,
> Turn vinegar, and come again in play.*

Thus the corruption of a poet is the generation of a critic; I mean of a critic in the general acceptation of this age; for formerly they were quite another species of men. They were defenders of poets, and commentators on their works; —to illustrate obscure beauties; to place some passages in a better light; to redeem others from malicious interpretations; to help out an author's modesty, who is not ostentatious of his wit; and, in short, to shield him from the ill-nature of those fellows, who were then called Zoili and Momi, and now take upon themselves the venerable name of censors. But neither Zoilus, nor he who endeavoured to defame Virgil, were ever adopted into the name of critics by the ancients. What their reputation was then, we know; and their successors in this age deserve no better. Are our

* These lines are quoted from Lord Dorset's address "to Mr. Edward Howard, on his incomparable, incomprehensible poem, called, *The British Princes*:"—

> Wit, like tierce claret, when it 'gins to pall,
> Neglected lies, and 's of no use at all;
> But, in its full perfection of decay,
> Turns vinegar, and comes again in play.

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auxiliary forces turned our enemies? are they, who at best are but wits of the second order, and whose only credit amongst readers is what they obtained by being subservient to the fame of writers, are these become rebels, of slaves, and usurpers, of subjects? or, to speak in the most honourable terms of them, are they, from our seconds become principals against us? Does the ivy undermine the oak, which supports its weakness? What labour would it cost them to put in a better line, than the worst of those which they expunge in a true poet? Petronius, the greatest wit perhaps of all the Romans, yet when his envy prevailed upon his judgment to fall on Lucan, he fell himself in his attempt; he performed worse in his *Essay of the Civil War* than the author of the *Pharsalia;* and, avoiding his errors, has made greater of his own. Julius Scaliger would needs turn down Homer, and abdicate him after the possession of three thousand years: has he succeeded in his attempt? he has indeed shown us some of those imperfections in him, which are incident to humankind; but who had not rather be that Homer than this Scaliger? You see the same hypercritic, when he endeavours to mend the beginning of Claudian, (a faulty poet, and living in a barbarous age,) yet how short he comes of him, and substitutes such verses of his own as deserve the ferula. What a censure has he made of Lucan, that "he rather seems to bark than sing"! Would any but a dog have made so snarling a comparison? one would have thought he had learned Latin as late as they tell us he did Greek. Yet he came off, with a *pace tuâ*,—by your good leave, Lucan; he called him not by those outrageous names, of fool, booby, and blockhead: he had somewhat more of good

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manners than his successors, as he had much more knowledge. We have two sorts of those gentlemen in our nation; some of them, proceeding with a seeming moderation and pretence of respect to the dramatic writers of the last age, only scorn and vilify the present poets, to set up their predecessors. But this is only in appearance; for their real design is nothing less than to do honour to any man, besides themselves. Horace took notice of such men in his age—

Ingeniis non ille favet plauditque sepultis,
*Nostra sed impugnat; nos nostraque lividus odit.**

It is not with an ultimate intention to pay reverence to the manes of Shakespeare, Fletcher, and Ben Jonson, that they commend their writings, but to throw dirt on the writers of this age: their declaration is one thing, and their practice is another. By a seeming veneration to our fathers, they would thrust out us, their lawful issue, and govern us themselves, under a specious pretence of reformation. If they could compass their intent, what would wit and learning get by such a change? If we are bad poets, they are worse; and when any of their woful pieces come abroad, the difference is so great betwixt them and good writers, that there need no criticisms on our part to decide it. When they describe the writers of this age, they draw such monstrous figures of them, as resemble none of us; our pretended pictures are so unlike, that it is evident we never sat to them: they are all grotesque; the products of their wild imaginations, things out of nature; so far from being copied from us, that

* [Scott has restored the exact quotation. In the original it stands *memoriter*, "*Non ingeniis favet ille sepultis*," etc.—ED.]

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they resemble nothing that ever was, or ever can be. But there is another sort of insects, more venomous than the former; those who manifestly aim at the destruction of our poetical church and state; who allow nothing to their countrymen, either of this or of the former age. These attack the living by raking up the ashes of the dead; well knowing that if they can subvert their original title to the stage, we who claim under them must fall of course. Peace be to the venerable shades of Shakespeare and Ben Jonson! none of the living will presume to have any competition with them; as they were our predecessors, so they were our masters. We trail our plays under them; but as at the funerals of a Turkish emperor, our ensigns are furled or dragged upon the ground, in honour to the dead, so we may lawfully advance our own afterwards, to show that we succeed; if less in dignity, yet on the same foot and title, which we think too we can maintain against the insolence of our own janizaries. If I am the man, as I have reason to believe, who am seemingly courted, and secretly undermined; I think I shall be able to defend myself, when I am openly attacked; and to show, besides, that the Greek writers only gave us the rudiments of a stage which they never finished; that many of the tragedies in the former age amongst us were without comparison beyond those of Sophocles and Euripides. But at present I have neither the leisure, nor the means, for such an undertaking. It is ill going to law for an estate, with him who is in possession of it, and enjoys the present profits, to feed his cause. But the *quantum mutatus* may be remembered in due time. In the meanwhile, I leave the world to judge, who gave the provocation.

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This, my Lord, is, I confess, a long digression, from miscellany poems to modern tragedies; but I have the ordinary excuse of an injured man, who will be telling his tale unseasonably to his betters; though, at the same time, I am certain you are so good a friend, as to take a concern in all things which belong to one who so truly honours you. And besides, being yourself a a critic of the genuine sort, who have read the best authors in their own languages, who perfectly distinguish of their several merits, and in general prefer them to the moderns, yet, I know, you judge for the English tragedies, against Greek and Latin, as well as against the French, Italian, and Spanish, of these latter ages. Indeed, there is a vast difference betwixt arguing like Perrault, in behalf of the French poets, against Homer and Virgil, and betwixt giving the English poets their undoubted due, of excelling Æschylus, Euripides, and Sophocles. For if we, or our greater fathers, have not yet brought the drama to an absolute perfection, yet at least we have carried it much further than those ancient Greeks; who, beginning from a chorus, could never totally exclude it, as we have done; who find it an unprofitable encumbrance, without any necessity of entertaining it amongst us, and without the possibility of establishing it here, unless it were supported by a public charge. Neither can we accept of those lay-bishops, as some call them, who, under pretence of reforming the stage, would intrude themselves upon us, as our superiors; being indeed incompetent judges of what is manners, what religion, and, least of all, what is poetry and good sense. I can tell them, in behalf of all my fellows, that when they come to exercise a jurisdiction over us, they shall

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have the stage to themselves, as they have the laurel. As little can I grant, that the French dramatic writers excel the English. Our authors as far surpass them in genius, as our soldiers excel theirs in courage. It is true, in conduct they surpass us either way; yet that proceeds not so much from their greater knowledge, as from the difference of tastes in the two nations. They content themselves with a thin design, without episodes, and managed by few persons; our audience will not be pleased, but with variety of accidents, an underplot, and many actors. They follow the ancients too servilely in the mechanic rules, and we assume too much licence to ourselves, in keeping them only in view at too great a distance. But if our audience had their tastes, our poets could more easily comply with them, than the French writers could come up to the sublimity of our thoughts, or to the difficult variety of our designs. However it be, I dare establish it for a rule of practice on the stage, that we are bound to please those whom we pretend to entertain; and that at any price, religion and good manners only excepted; and I care not much if I give this handle to our bad illiterate poetasters, for the defence of their *Scriptions*, as they call them. There is a sort of merit in delighting the spectators, which is a name more proper for them, than that of auditors; or else Horace is in the wrong, when he commends Lucilius for it. But these common-places I mean to treat at greater leisure; in the meantime submitting that little I have said to your Lordship's approbation, or your censure, and choosing rather to entertain you this way, as you are a judge of writing, than to oppress your modesty with other commendations; which, though they

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are your due, yet would not be equally received in this satirical and censorious age. That which cannot, without injury, be denied to you, is the easiness of your conversation, far from affectation or pride; not denying even to enemies their just praises. And this, if I would dwell on any theme of this nature, is no vulgar commendation to your Lordship. Without flattery, my Lord, you have it in your nature to be a patron and encourager of good poets; but your fortune has not yet put into your hands the opportunity of expressing it. What you will be hereafter, may be more than guessed by what you are at present. You maintain the character of a nobleman, without that haughtiness which generally attends too many of the nobility; and when you converse with gentlemen, you forget not that you have been of their order. You are married to the daughter of a king; who, amongst her other high perfections, has derived from him a charming behaviour, a winning goodness, and a majestic person. The Muses and the Graces are the ornaments of your family; while the Muse sings, the Grace accompanies her voice: even the servants of the Muses have sometimes had the happiness to hear her, and to receive their inspirations from her.*

I will not give myself the liberty of going further; for it is so sweet to wander in a pleasing way, that I should never arrive at my journey's end. To keep myself from being belated in my letter, and tiring your attention, I must return

* The poet apparently speaks of Lady Radcliffe, who probably inherited those vocal powers with which her mother, Moll Davies, charmed Charles II. The Grace might be her daughter.

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to the place where I was setting out. I humbly dedicate to your Lordship my own labours in this Miscellany; at the same time not arrogating to myself the privilege, of inscribing to you the works of others who are joined with me in this undertaking, over which I can pretend no right. Your lady and you have done me the favour to hear me read my translations of Ovid; and you both seemed not to be displeased with them. Whether it be the partiality of an old man to his youngest child, I know not; but they appear to me the best of all my endeavours in this kind. Perhaps this poet is more easy to be translated than some others whom I have lately attempted; perhaps, too, he was more according to my genius. He is certainly more palatable to the reader, than any of the Roman wits; though some of them are more lofty, some more instructive, and others more correct. He had learning enough to make him equal to the best; but, as his verse came easily, he wanted the toil of application to amend it. He is often luxuriant both in his fancy and expressions, and, as it has lately been observed, not always natural. If wit be pleasantry, he has it to excess; but if it be propriety, Lucretius, Horace, and, above all, Virgil, are his superiors. I have said so much of him already in my Preface to his *Heroical Epistles*, that there remains little to be added in this place: for my own part, I have endeavoured to copy his character, what I could, in this translation; even, perhaps, further than I should have done,—to his very faults. Mr. Chapman, in his *Translation of Homer*, professes to have done it somewhat paraphrastically, and that on set purpose; his opinion being that a good poet is to be translated in that manner. I remember not the reason which he gives for it;

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but I suppose it is for fear of omitting any of his excellences. Sure I am, that if it be a fault, it is much more pardonable than that of those, who run into the other extreme of a literal and close translation, where the poet is confined so straitly to his author's words, that he wants elbow-room to express his elegancies. He leaves him obscure; he leaves him prose, where he found him verse; and no better than thus has Ovid been served by the so-much-admired Sandys. This is at least the idea which I have remaining of his translation; for I never read him since I was a boy. They who take him upon content, from the praises which their fathers gave him, may inform their judgment by reading him again, and see (if they understand the original) what is become of Ovid's poetry in his version; whether it be not all, or the greatest part of it, evaporated. But this proceeded from the wrong judgment of the age in which he lived. They neither knew good verse, nor loved it; they were scholars, it is true, but they were pedants; and, for a just reward of their pedantic pains, all their translations want to be translated into English.

If I flatter not myself, or if my friends have not flattered me, I have given my author's sense for the most part truly; for, to mistake sometimes is incident to all men; and not to follow the Dutch commentators always, may be forgiven to a man who thinks them, in the general, heavy gross-witted fellows, fit only to gloss on their own dull poets. But I leave a further satire on their wit, till I have a better opportunity to show how much I love and honour them. I have likewise attempted to restore Ovid to his native sweetness, easiness, and smoothness; and to give my poetry a kind of cadence, and, as we

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call it, a run of verse, as like the original, as the English can come up to the Latin. As he seldom uses any synalœphas, so I have endeavoured to avoid them as often as I could. I have likewise given him his own turns, both on the words and on the thought; which I cannot say are inimitable, because I have copied them, and so may others, if they use the same diligence; but certainly they are wonderfully graceful in this poet. Since I have named the synalœpha, which is the cutting off one vowel immediately before another, I will give an example of it from Chapman's "Homer," which lies before me, for the benefit of those who understand not the *Latin prosodia*. It is in the first line of the argument to the first Iliad—

> Apollo's priest to th' Argive fleet doth bring, *etc.*

There, we see, he makes it not, *the Argive*, but *th' Argive*, to shun the shock of the two vowels, immediately following each other; but, in his second argument, in the same page, he gives a bad example of the quite contrary kind—

> Alpha the prayer of Chryses sings:
> The army's plague, the strife of kings.

In these words, *the army's*,—*the* ending with a vowel, and *army's* beginning with another vowel, without cutting off the first, which by it had been *th' army's*, there remains a most horrible ill-sounding gap betwixt those words. I cannot say that I have everywhere observed the rule of the synalœpha in my translation; but wheresoever I have not, it is a fault in sound. The French and the Italians have made it an inviolable precept in their versification; therein following the severe example of the Latin poets. Our countrymen have not yet reformed their poetry so far, but

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content themselves with following the licentious practice of the Greeks; who, though they sometimes use synalœphas, yet make no difficulty, very often, to sound one vowel upon another; as Homer does, in the very first line of Alpha—

Μήνιν ἄειδε, Θεὰ, Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος.

It is true, indeed, that, in the second line, in these words, μυρί' Ἀχαιοῖς, and ἄλγε' ἔθηκε, the synalœpha, in revenge, is twice observed. But it becomes us, for the sake of euphony, rather *Musas colere severiores*, with the Romans, than to give into the looseness of the Grecians.*

I have tired myself, and have been summoned by the press to send away this Dedication, otherwise I had exposed some other faults, which are daily committed by our English poets; which, with care and observation might be amended. For, after all, our language is both copious, significant, and majestical, and might be reduced into a more harmonious sound. But, for want of public encouragement, in this iron age, we are so far from making any progress in the improvement of our tongue, that in few years we shall speak and write as barbarously as our neighbours.

Notwithstanding my haste, I cannot forbear to tell your Lordship, that there are two fragments of Homer translated in this Miscellany; one by Mr. Congreve, (whom I cannot mention without the honour which is due to his excellent parts, and that entire affection which I bear him,) and the other by myself. Both the subjects are pathetical; and I am sure my friend has added to

*[This is one of the few metrical points on which Dryden is undoubtedly wrong,—slurring, not elision, being proper to English.—Ed.]

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the tenderness which he found in the original, and without flattery, surpassed his author. Yet I must needs say this in reference to Homer, that he is much more capable of exciting the manly passions than those of grief and pity. To cause admiration is, indeed, the proper and adequate design of an epic poem; and in that he has excelled even Virgil. Yet, without presuming to arraign our master, I may venture to affirm, that he is somewhat too talkative, and more than somewhat too digressive. This is so manifest, that it cannot be denied in that little parcel which I have translated, perhaps too literally: there Andromache, in the midst of her concernment and fright for Hector, runs off her bias,* to tell him a story of her pedigree, and of the lamentable death of her father, her mother, and her seven brothers. The devil was in Hector if he knew not all this matter, as well as she who told it him; for she had been his bedfellow for many years together: and if he knew it, then it must be confessed, that Homer, in this long digression, has rather given us his own character, than that of the fair lady whom he paints. His dear friends, the commentators, who never fail him at a pinch, will needs excuse him, by making the present sorrow of Andromache to occasion the remembrance of all the past; but others think, that she had enough to do with that grief which now oppressed her, without running for assistance to her family. Virgil, I am confident, would have omitted such a work of supererogation. But Virgil had the gift of expressing much in little, and sometimes in silence; for, though he yielded

* [Technically of a bowl which diverges from its proper course.—Ed.]

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much to Homer in invention, he more excelled him in his admirable judgment. He drew the passion of Dido for Æneas, in the most lively and most natural colours that are imaginable. Homer was ambitious enough of moving pity, for he has attempted twice on the same subject of Hector's death; first, when Priam and Hecuba beheld his corpse, which was dragged after the chariot of Achilles; and then in the lamentation which was made over him, when his body was redeemed by Priam; and the same persons again bewail his death, with a chorus of others to help the cry. But if this last excite compassion in you, as I doubt not but it will, you are more obliged to the translator than the poet; for Homer, as I observed before, can move rage better than he can pity. He stirs up the irascible appetite, as our philosophers call it; he provokes to murder, and the destruction of God's images; he forms and equips those ungodly man-killers, whom we poets, when we flatter them, call heroes; a race of men who can never enjoy quiet in themselves, until they have taken it from all the world. This is Homer's commendation; and, such as it is, the lovers of peace, or at least of more moderate heroism, will never envy him. But let Homer and Virgil contend for the prize of honour betwixt themselves; I am satisfied they will never have a third concurrent. I wish Mr. Congreve had the leisure to translate him, and the world the good nature and justice to encourage him in that noble design, of which he is more capable than any man I know. The Earl of Mulgrave and Mr. Waller, two of the best judges of our age, have assured me, that they could never read over the translation of Chapman without in-

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credible pleasure and extreme transport. This admiration of theirs must needs proceed from the author himself; for the translator has thrown him down as low as harsh numbers, improper English, and a monstrous length of verse could carry him.* What then would he appear in the harmonious version of one of the best writers, living in a much better age than was the last? I mean for versification, and the art of numbers; for in the drama we have not arrived to the pitch of Shakespeare and Ben Jonson. But here, my Lord, I am forced to break off abruptly, without endeavouring at a compliment in the close. This Miscellany is, without dispute, one of the best of the kind which has hitherto been extant in our tongue; at least, as Sir Samuel Tuke has said before me, a modest man may praise what is not his own. My fellows have no need of any protection; but I humbly recommend my part of it, as much as it deserves, to your patronage and acceptance, and all the rest to your forgiveness.—I am,

MY LORD,

Your Lordship's most obedient Servant,

JOHN DRYDEN.

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* [This most unjust verdict is a rebound from the excessive youthful admiration which, as Dryden elsewhere tells us, he had for Chapman. It may be observed that the elided "*th'*," etc., will not be found in the following text. Being merely a conventional form, now disused, of indicating what Dryden calls "synalœpha," and not affecting the actual scansion, it does not seem to come within the exceptions to modern printing mentioned in the general Preface to this edition. —ED.]

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THE

FIRST BOOK

OF

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

Of bodies changed to various forms I sing:—
Ye gods, from whom these miracles did spring,
Inspire my numbers with celestial heat,
Till I my long laborious work complete;
And add perpetual tenor * to my rhymes,
Deduced from nature's birth to Cæsar's times.
Before the seas, and this terrestrial ball,
And heaven's high canopy, that covers all,
One was the face of nature, if a face;
Rather a rude and indigested mass;
A lifeless lump, unfashioned, and unframed,
Of jarring seeds, and justly chaos named.
No sun was lighted up the world to view;
No moon did yet her blunted horns renew;
Nor yet was earth suspended in the sky,
Nor, poised, did on her own foundations lie;

[* This odd phrase merely means, "Let them go on unbroken."—Ed.]

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Nor seas about the shores their arms had thrown;
But earth, and air, and water, were in one.
Thus air was void of light, and earth unstable,
And water's dark abyss unnavigable.
No certain form on any was imprest;
All were confused, and each disturbed the rest:
For hot and cold were in one body fixed;
And soft with hard, and light with heavy, mixed.
But God, or Nature, while they thus contend,
To these intestine discords put an end.
Then earth from air, and seas from earth, were driven,
And grosser air sunk from ethereal heaven.
Thus disembroiled, they take their proper place;
The next of kin contiguously embrace;
And foes are sundered by a larger space.
The force of fire ascended first on high,
And took its dwelling in the vaulted sky.
Then air succeeds, in lightness next to fire,
Whose atoms from unactive earth retire.
Earth sinks beneath, and draws a numerous throng,
Of ponderous, thick unwieldy seeds along.
About her coasts unruly waters roar,
And, rising on a ridge, insult the shore.
Thus when the God, whatever God was he,
Had formed the whole, and made the parts agree,
That no unequal portions might be found,
He moulded earth into a spacious round;
Then, with a breath, he gave the winds to blow,
And bade the congregated waters flow:
He adds the running springs, and standing lakes,
And bounding banks for winding rivers makes.
Some part in earth are swallowed up, the most
In ample oceans, disembogued, are lost:
He shades the woods, the valleys he restrains
With rocky mountains, and extends the plains.

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And as five zones the ethereal regions bind,
Five, correspondent, are to earth assigned;
The sun, with rays directly darting down,
Fires all beneath, and fries the middle zone:
The two beneath the distant poles complain
Of endless winter, and perpetual rain.
Betwixt the extremes, two happier climates hold
The temper that partakes of hot and cold.
The fields of liquid air, inclosing all,
Surround the compass of this earthly ball:
The lighter parts lie next the fires above;
The grosser near the watery surface move:
Thick clouds are spread, and storms engender there,
And thunder's voice, which wretched mortals fear,
And winds that on their wings cold winter bear.
Nor were those blustering brethren left at large,
On seas and shores their fury to discharge:
Bound as they are, and circumscribed in place,
They rend the world, resistless, where they pass,
And mighty marks of mischief leave behind;
Such is the rage of their tempestuous kind.
First, Eurus to the rising morn is sent,
(The regions of the balmy continent,)
And Eastern realms, where early Persians run,
To greet the blest appearance of the sun.
Westward the wanton Zephyr wings his flight,
Pleased with the remnants of departing light;
Fierce Boreas with his offspring issues forth,
To invade the frozen waggon * of the North;
While frowning Auster seeks the Southern sphere,
And rots, with endless rain, the unwholesome year.

* [The constellation of the Great Bear (Charles's Wain).—Ed.]

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High o'er the clouds, and empty realms of wind,
The God a clearer space for heaven designed;
Where fields of light and liquid ether flow,
Purged from the ponderous dregs of earth below.
Scarce had the Power distinguished these, when straight
The stars, no longer overlaid with weight,
Exert their heads from underneath the mass,
And upward shoot, and kindle as they pass,
And with diffusive light adorn their heavenly place.
Then, every void of nature to supply,
With forms of gods he fills the vacant sky:
New herds of beasts he sends, the plains to share;
New colonies of birds, to people air;
And to their oozy beds the finny fish repair.
A creature of a more exalted kind
Was wanting yet, and then was man designed;
Conscious of thought, of more capacious breast,
For empire formed, and fit to rule the rest:
Whether with particles of heavenly fire
The God of nature did his soul inspire;
Or earth, but new divided from the sky,
And pliant still, retained the ethereal energy;
Which wise Prometheus tempered into paste,
And, mixed with living streams, the god-like image cast.
Thus, while the mute creation downward bend
Their sight, and to their earthy mother tend,
Man looks aloft, and, with erected eyes,
Beholds his own hereditary skies.—
From such rude principles our form began,
And earth was metamorphosed into man.

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The Golden Age.

The Golden Age was first; when man, yet new,
No rule but uncorrupted reason knew;
And, with a native bent, did good pursue.
Unforced by punishment, unawed by fear,
His words were simple, and his soul sincere.
Needless was written law, where none opprest;
The law of man was written in his breast.
No suppliant crowds before the judge appeared;
No court erected yet, nor cause was heard;
But all was safe, for conscience was their guard.
The mountain trees in distant prospect please,
Ere yet the pine descended to the seas;
Ere sails were spread, new oceans to explore;
And happy mortals, unconcerned for more,
Confined their wishes to their native shore.
No walls were yet, nor fence, nor moat, nor mound;
Nor drum was heard, nor trumpet's angry sound;
Nor swords were forged; but, void of care and crime,
The soft creation slept away their time.
The teeming earth, yet guiltless of the plough,
And unprovoked, did fruitful stores allow:
Content with food, which nature freely bred,
On wildings * and on strawberries they fed;
Cornels and bramble-berries gave the rest,
And falling acorns furnished out a feast.
The flowers, unsown, in fields and meadows reigned;
And western winds immortal spring maintained.

* ["Wilding," though general in derivation, was specially used for a crab apple.—Ed.]

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In following years the bearded corn ensued
From earth unasked, nor was that earth renewed.
From veins of valleys milk and nectar broke,
And honey sweating through the pores of oak.

The Silver Age.

But when good Saturn, banished from above,
Was driven to hell, the world was under Jove.
Succeeding times a Silver Age behold,
Excelling brass, but more excelled by gold.
Then Summer, Autumn, Winter did appear,
And Spring was but a season of the year.
The sun his annual course obliquely made,
Good days contracted, and enlarged the bad.
Then air with sultry heats began to glow,
The wings of winds were clogged with ice and snow;
And shivering mortals, into houses driven,
Sought shelter from the inclemency of heaven.
Those houses, then, were caves, or homely sheds,
With twining osiers fenced, and moss their beds.
Then ploughs for seed the fruitful furrows broke,
And oxen laboured first beneath the yoke.

The Brazen Age.

To this next came in course the Brazen Age:
A warlike offspring prompt to bloody rage,
Not impious yet.——

The Iron Age.

——————Hard Steel succeeded then;
And stubborn as the metal were the men.
Truth, modesty, and shame, the world forsook;
Fraud, avarice, and force, their places took.
Then sails were spread to every wind that blew;
Raw were the sailors, and the depths were new:

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Trees, rudely hollowed, did the waves sustain,
Ere ships in triumph ploughed the watery plain.
Then landmarks limited to each his right;
For all before was common as the light.
Nor was the ground alone required to bear
Her annual income to the crooked share;
But greedy mortals, rummaging her store,
Digged from her entrails first the precious ore;
Which next to hell the prudent gods had laid,
And that alluring ill to sight displayed.
Thus cursed Steel, and more accursed Gold,
Gave mischief birth, and made that mischief bold;
And double death did wretched man invade,
By steel assaulted, and by gold betrayed.
Now (brandished weapons glittering in their hands)
Mankind is broken loose from moral bands:
No rights of hospitality remain,
The guest, by him who harboured him, is slain;
The son-in-law pursues the father's life;
The wife her husband murders, he the wife;
The step-dame poison for the son prepares;
The son inquires into his father's years.*
Faith flies, and Piety in exile mourns:
And Justice, here oppressed, to heaven returns.

The Giants' War.

Nor were the Gods themselves more safe above;
Against beleaguered heaven the Giants move.
Hills piled on hills, on mountains mountains lie,
To make their mad approaches to the sky:

* [By omitting to render *ante diem* Dryden rather obscures the sense.—Ed.]

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Till Jove, no longer patient, took his time
To avenge with thunder their audacious crime;
Red lightning played along the firmament,
And their demolished works to pieces rent.
Singed with the flames, and with the bolts transfixed,
With native earth their blood the monsters mixed;
The blood, endued with animating heat,
Did in the impregnate earth new sons beget;
They, like the seed from which they sprung, accursed,
Against the gods immortal hatred nursed;
An impious, arrogant, and cruel brood,
Expressing their original from blood.
Which when the King of Gods beheld from high,
(Withal revolving in his memory,
What he himself had found on earth of late,
Lycaon's guilt, and his inhuman treat,)
He sighed, nor longer with his pity strove,
But kindled to a wrath becoming Jove:
Then called a general council of the gods;
Who, summoned, issue from their blest abodes,
And fill the assembly with a shining train.
A way there is in heaven's expanded plain,
Which, when the skies are clear, is seen below,
And mortals by the name of Milky know.
The ground-work is of stars; through which the road
Lies open to the Thunderer's abode.
The gods of greater nations dwell around,
And on the right and left the palace bound;
The commons where they can; the nobler sort,
With winding doors wide open, front the court.

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This place, as far as earth with heaven may vie,
I dare to call the Louvre * of the sky.
When all were placed, in seats distinctly known,
And he, their father, had assumed the throne,
Upon his ivory sceptre first he leant,
Then shook his head, that shook the firmament;
Air, earth, and seas obeyed the almighty nod,
And with a general fear confessed the God.
At length, with indignation, thus he broke
His awful silence, and the Powers bespoke.†
"I was not more concerned in that debate
Of empire, when our universal state
Was put to hazard, and the giant race
Our captive skies were ready to embrace:
For, though the foe was fierce, the seeds of all
Rebellion sprung from one original;
Now wheresoever ambient waters glide,
All are corrupt, and all must be destroyed.
Let me this holy protestation make,
By hell, and hell's inviolable lake!
I tried whatever in the Godhead lay;
But gangrened members must be lopt away,
Before the nobler parts are tainted to decay.
There dwells below a race of demi-gods,
Of nymphs in waters, and of fauns in woods;
Who, though not worthy yet in heaven to live,
Let them at least enjoy that earth we give.
Can these be thought securely lodged below,
When I myself, who no superior know,
I, who have heaven and earth at my command,
Have been attempted by Lycaon's hand?"

* [As Dryden has been blamed for this, it is fair to say that Ovid's *palatia* is nearly as questionable in taste as a piece of irrelevant flattery or modernism.—Ed.]

† [So not common, and not very correct.—Ed.]

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At this a murmur through the synod went,
And with one voice they vote his punishment.
Thus, when conspiring traitors dared to doom
The fall of Cæsar, and in him of Rome,
The nations trembled with a pious fear,
All anxious for their earthly thunderer;—
Nor was their care, O Cæsar, less esteemed
By thee, than that of heaven for Jove was deemed;
Who with his hand, and voice, did first restrain
Their murmurs, then resumed his speech again.
The Gods to silence were composed, and sat
With reverence due to his superior state.
"Cancel your pious cares; already he
Has paid his debt to justice, and to me.
Yet what his crimes, and what my judgments were,
Remains for me thus briefly to declare.
The clamours of this vile degenerate age,
The cries of orphans, and the oppressor's rage,
Had reached the stars; 'I will descend,' said I,
'In hope to prove this loud complaint a lie.'
Disguised in human shape, I travelled round
The world, and more than what I heard, I found.
O'er Mænalus I took my steepy way,
By caverns infamous for beasts of prey;
Then crossed Cyllene, and the piny shade,
More infamous by curst Lycaon made;
Dark night had covered heaven and earth, before
I entered his unhospitable door.
Just at my entrance, I displayed the sign
That somewhat was approaching of divine.
The prostrate people pray; the tyrant grins;
And, adding profanation to his sins,
'I 'll try,' said he, 'and if a God appear,
To prove his deity shall cost him dear.'

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'Twas late; the graceless wretch my death prepares,
When I should soundly sleep, opprest with cares:
This dire experiment he chose, to prove
If I were mortal, or undoubted Jove.
But first he had resolved to taste my power:
Not long before, but in a luckless hour,
Some legates, sent from the Molossian state,
Were on a peaceful errand come to treat;
Of these he murders one, he boils the flesh,
And lays the mangled morsels in a dish;
Some part he roasts; then serves it up so drest,
And bids me welcome to this human feast.
Moved with disdain, the table I o'erturned,
And with avenging flames the palace burned.
The tyrant, in a fright, for shelter gains
The neighbouring fields, and scours along the plains.
Howling he fled, and fain he would have spoke,
But human voice his brutal tongue forsook.
About his lips the gathered foam he churns,
And, breathing slaughter, still with rage he burns,
But on the bleating flock his fury turns.
His mantle, now his hide, with rugged hairs
Cleaves to his back; a famished face he bears;
His arms descend, his shoulders sink away,
To multiply his legs for chase of prey.
He grows a wolf, his hoariness remains,
And the same rage in other members reigns.
His eyes still sparkle in a narrower space,
His jaws retain the grin, and violence of his face.
"This was a single ruin, but not one
Deserves so just a punishment alone.
Mankind 's a monster, and the ungodly times,
Confederate into guilt, are sworn to crimes.

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All are alike involved in ill, and all
Must by the same relentless fury fall."
  Thus ended he; the greater gods assent,
By clamours urging his severe intent;
The less fill up the cry for punishment.
Yet still with pity they remember man,
And mourn as much as heavenly spirits can.
They ask, when those were lost of human birth,
What he would do with all this waste of earth?
If his dispeopled world he would resign
To beasts, a mute, and more ignoble line?
Neglected altars must no longer smoke,
If none were left to worship and invoke.
To whom the Father of the Gods replied:
"Lay that unnecessary fear aside;
Mine be the care new people to provide.
I will from wondrous principles ordain
A race unlike the first, and try my skill again."
  Already had he tossed the flaming brand,
And rolled the thunder in his spacious hand,
Preparing to discharge on seas and land;
But stopp'd, for fear, thus violently driven,
The sparks should catch his axle-tree of heaven;
Rememb'ring, in the Fates, a time, when fire
Should to the battlements of heaven aspire,
And all his blazing worlds above should burn,
And all the inferior globe to cinders turn.
His dire artillery thus dismissed, he bent
His thoughts to some securer punishment;
Concludes to pour a watery deluge down,
And, what he durst not burn, resolves to drown.
  The Northern breath, that freezes floods, he binds,
With all the race of cloud-dispelling winds;
The South he loosed, who night and horror brings,
And fogs are shaken from his flaggy wings.

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From his divided beard two streams he pours;
His head and rheumy eyes distil in showers;
With rain his robe and heavy mantle flow,
And lazy mists are low'ring on his brow.
Still as he swept along, with his clenched fist,
He squeezed the clouds; the imprisoned clouds resist;
The skies, from pole to pole, with peals resound,
And showers enlarged come pouring on the ground.
Then clad in colours of a various dye,
Junonian Iris breeds a new supply
To feed the clouds: impetuous rain descends;
The bearded corn beneath the burden bends;
Defrauded clowns deplore their perished grain,
And the long labours of the year are vain.
Nor from his patrimonial heaven alone
Is Jove content to pour his vengeance down;
Aid from his brother of the seas he craves,
To help him with auxiliary waves.
The watery tyrant calls his brooks and floods,
Who roll from mossy caves, their moist abodes;
And with perpetual urns his palace fill:
To whom, in brief, he thus imparts his will.
"Small exhortation needs; your powers employ,
And this bad world (so Jove requires) destroy.
Let loose the reins to all your watery store;
Bear down the dams, and open every door."
The floods, by nature enemies to land,
And proudly swelling with their new command,
Remove the living stones that stopped their way,
And, gushing from their source, augment the sea.*

* In all our earlier poets the word "sea" is occasionally made to rhyme, according to the pronunciation of Hibernia, as if spelled *say*.

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Then, with his mace, their monarch struck the ground;
With inward trembling earth received the wound,
And rising streams a ready passage found.
The expanded waters gather on the plain,
They float the fields, and overtop the grain;
Then rushing onwards, with a sweepy sway,
Bear flocks, and folds, and labouring hinds, away.
Nor safe their dwellings were; for sapp'd by floods,
Their houses fell upon their household gods.
The solid piles, too strongly built to fall,
High o'er their heads behold a watery wall.
Now seas and earth were in confusion lost;
A world of waters, and without a coast.
One climbs a cliff; one in his boat is borne,
And ploughs above, where late he sowed his corn.
Others o'er chimney-tops and turrets row,
And drop their anchors on the meads below;
Or, downward driven, they bruise the tender vine,
Or, tossed aloft, are knocked against a pine;
And where of late the kids had cropped the grass,
The monsters of the deep now take their place.
Insulting Nereids on the cities ride,
And wondering dolphins o'er the palace glide;
On leaves, and masts of mighty oaks, they browse;
And their broad fins entangle in the boughs.
The frighted wolf now swims among the sheep;
The yellow lion wanders in the deep;
His rapid force no longer helps the boar;
The stag swims faster than he ran before.*
The fowls, long beating on their wings in vain,
Despair of land, and drop into the main.

* Ovid is not answerable for the speed of the stag's exertions in the water; he barely says—

Crura nec ablato prosunt velocia cervo.

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Now hills and vales no more distinction know,
And levelled nature lies oppressed below.
The most of mortals perish in the flood,
The small remainder dies for want of food.
A mountain of stupendous height there stands
Betwixt the Athenian and Bœotian lands,
The bound of fruitful fields, while fields they were,
But then a field of waters did appear:
Parnassus is its name, whose forky rise
Mounts through the clouds, and mates the lofty skies.
High on the summit of this dubious cliff,
Deucalion wafting moored his little skiff.
He with his wife were only left behind
Of perished man; they two were humankind.
The mountain-nymphs and Themis they adore,
And from her oracles relief implore.
The most upright of mortal men was he;
The most sincere and holy woman, she.
When Jupiter, surveying earth from high,
Beheld it in a lake of water lie,
That where so many millions lately lived,
But two, the best of either sex, survived,
He loosed the northern wind; fierce Boreas flies
To puff away the clouds, and purge the skies;
Serenely, while he blows, the vapours driven
Discover heaven to earth, and earth to heaven.
The billows fall, while Neptune lays his mace
On the rough sea, and smooths its furrowed face.
Already Triton, at his call, appears
Above the waves; a Tyrian robe he wears;
And in his hand a crooked trumpet bears.
The sovereign bids him peaceful sounds inspire,
And give the waves the signal to retire.
His writhen shell he takes, whose narrow vent
Grows by degrees into a large extent;

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Then gives it breath; the blast, with doubling sound,
Runs the wide circuit of the world around.
The sun first heard it, in his early east,
And met the rattling echoes in the west,
The waters, listening to the trumpet's roar,
Obey the summons, and forsake the shore.
A thin circumference of land appears;
And earth, but not at once, her visage rears,
And peeps upon the seas from upper grounds:
The streams, but just contained within their bounds,
By slow degrees into their channels crawl,
And earth increases as the waters fall.
In longer time the tops of trees appear,
Which mud on their dishonoured branches bear.
At length the world was all restored to view,
But desolate, and of a sickly hue:
Nature beheld herself, and stood aghast,
A dismal desert, and a silent waste.
Which when Deucalion, with a piteous look,
Beheld, he wept, and thus to Pyrrha spoke:
"O wife, O sister, oh, of all thy kind,
The best and only creature left behind,
By kindred, love, and now by dangers joined;
Of multitudes, who breathed the common air,
We two remain, a species in a pair:
The rest the seas have swallowed; nor have we
E'en of this wretched life a certainty.
The clouds are still above; and, while I speak,
A second deluge o'er our heads may break.
Should I be snatched from hence, and thou remain,
Without relief, or partner of thy pain,
How couldst thou such a wretched life sustain?
Should I be left, and thou be lost, the sea,
That buried her I loved, should bury me.

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Oh could our father * his old arts inspire,
And make me heir of his informing fire,
That so I might abolished man retrieve,
And perished people in new souls might live!
But heaven is pleased, nor ought we to complain,
That we, the examples of mankind, remain."
He said; the careful couple join their tears,
And then invoke the gods, with pious prayers.
Thus in devotion having eased their grief,
From sacred oracles they seek relief,
And to Cephisus' brook their way pursue;
The stream was troubled, but the ford they knew.
With living waters in the fountain bred,
They sprinkle first their garments, and their head,
Then took the way which to the temple led.
The roofs were all defiled with moss and mire,
The desert altars void of solemn fire.
Before the gradual † prostrate they adored,
The pavement kissed, and thus the saint implored.
"O righteous Themis, if the powers above
By prayers are bent to pity and to love;
If human miseries can move their mind;
If yet they can forgive, and yet be kind;
Tell how we may restore, by second birth,
Mankind, and people desolated earth."
Then thus the gracious goddess, nodding, said:
"Depart, and with your vestments veil your head:
And stooping lowly down, with loosened zones,
Throw each behind your backs your mighty mother's bones."
Amazed the pair, and mute with wonder, stand,
Till Pyrrha first refused the dire command.

* [Ovid gives the name, Prometheus.—Ed.]
† [The steps leading up to the altar or temple.—Ed.]

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"Forbid it heaven," said she, "that I should tear
Those holy relics from the sepulchre."
They pondered the mysterious words again,
For some new sense; and long they sought in vain.
At length Deucalion cleared his cloudy brow,
And said: "The dark enigma will allow
A meaning, which, if well I understand,
From sacrilege will free the god's command:
This earth our mighty mother is, the stones
In her capacious body are her bones;
These we must cast behind." With hope, and fear,
The woman did the new solution hear:
The man diffides in his own augury,
And doubts the gods; yet both resolve to try.
Descending from the mount, they first unbind
Their vests, and, veiled, they cast the stones behind:
The stones (a miracle to mortal view,
But long tradition makes it pass for true,)
Did first the rigour of their kind expel,
And suppled into softness as they fell;
Then swelled, and, swelling, by degrees grew warm,
And took the rudiments of human form;
Imperfect shapes, in marble such are seen,
When the rude chisel does the man begin,
While yet the roughness of the stone remains,
Without the rising muscles, and the veins.
The sappy parts, and next resembling juice,
Were turned to moisture, for the body's use;
Supplying humours, blood, and nourishment:
The rest, too solid to receive a bent,
Converts to bones; and what was once a vein,
Its former name and nature did retain.

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By help of power divine, in little space,
What the man threw, assumed a manly face;
And what the wife, renewed the female race.
Hence we derive our nature, born to bear
Laborious life, and hardened into care.
The rest of animals, from teeming earth
Produced, in various forms received their birth.
The native moisture, in its close retreat,
Digested by the sun's ethereal heat,
As in a kindly womb, began to breed;
Then swelled, and quickened by the vital seed:
And some in less, and some in longer space,
Were ripened into form, and took a several face.
Thus when the Nile from Pharian fields is fled,
And seeks with ebbing tides his ancient bed,
The fat manure with heavenly fire is warmed,
And crusted* creatures, as in wombs, are formed:
These, when they turn the glebe, the peasants find:
Some rude, and yet unfinished in their kind;
Short of their limbs, a lame imperfect birth;
One half alive, and one of lifeless earth.
For, heat and moisture, when in bodies joined,
The temper that results from either kind,
Conception makes; and fighting, till they mix,
Their mingled atoms in each other fix.
Thus nature's hand the genial bed prepares,
With friendly discord, and with fruitful wars.
From hence the surface of the ground, with mud
And slime besmeared, (the fæces of the flood,)
Received the rays of heaven; and sucking in
The seeds of heat, new creatures did begin.
Some were of several sorts produced before;
But of new monsters earth created more.

* [Ovid has nothing answering to this strange term.—Ed.]

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Unwillingly, but yet she brought to light
Thee, Python, too, the wondering world to fright,
And the new nations with so dire a sight;
So monstrous was his bulk, so large a space
Did his vast body and long train embrace:
Whom Phœbus basking on a bank espied.
Ere now the god his arrows had not tried,
But on the trembling deer, or mountain-goat;
At this new quarry he prepares to shoot.
Though every shaft took place, he spent the store
Of his full quiver; and 'twas long before
The expiring serpent wallowed in his gore.
Then to preserve the fame of such a deed,
For Python slain, he Pythian games decreed,
Where noble youths for mastership should strive,
To quoit, to run, and steeds and chariots drive.
The prize was fame; in witness of renown,
An oaken garland did the victor crown.
The laurel was not yet for triumphs borne;
But every green alike, by Phœbus worn,
Did, with promiscuous grace, his flowing locks adorn.

The Transformation of Daphne into a Laurel.

The first and fairest of his loves was she,
Whom not blind fortune, but the dire decree
Of angry Cupid, forced him to desire;
Daphne her name, and Peneus was her sire.
Swelled with the pride that new success attends,
He sees the stripling, while his bow he bends,
And thus insults him: "Thou lascivious boy,
Are arms like these for children to employ?
Know, such achievements are my proper claim,
Due to my vigour and unerring aim:

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Resistless are my shafts, and Python late,
In such a feathered death, has found his fate.
Take up thy torch, and lay my weapons by;
With that the feeble souls of lovers fry."
To whom the son of Venus thus replied:
"Phœbus, thy shafts are sure on all beside;
But mine on Phœbus; mine the fame shall be
Of all thy conquests, when I conquer thee."
He said, and soaring swiftly winged his flight;
Nor stopped but on Parnassus' airy height.
Two different shafts he from his quiver draws;
One to repel desire, and one to cause.
One shaft is pointed with refulgent gold,
To bribe the love, and make the lover bold;
One blunt, and tipt with lead, whose base allay
Provokes disdain, and drives desire away.
The blunted bolt against the nymph he drest;
But with the sharp transfixed Apollo's breast.
The enamoured deity pursues the chase;
The scornful damsel shuns his loathed embrace:
In hunting beasts of prey her youth employs,
And Phœbe rivals in her rural joys.
With naked neck she goes, and shoulders bare,
And with a fillet binds her flowing hair.
By many suitors sought, she mocks their pains,
And still her vowed virginity maintains.
Impatient of a yoke, the name of bride
She shuns, and hates the joys she never tried.
On wilds and woods she fixes her desire;
Nor knows what youth and kindly love inspire.
Her father chides her oft: "Thou ow'st," says he,
"A husband to thyself, a son to me."
She, like a crime, abhors the nuptial bed;
She glows with blushes, and she hangs her head.
Then, casting round his neck her tender arms,
Soothes him with blandishments, and filial charms:

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"Give me, my lord," she said, "to live and die
A spotless maid, without the marriage-tie.
'Tis but a small request; I beg no more
Than what Diana's father gave before."
The good old sire was softened to consent;
But said her wish would prove her punishment;
For so much youth, and so much beauty joined,
Opposed the state which her desires designed.
The God of Light, aspiring to her bed,
Hopes what he seeks, with flattering fancies fed,
And is by his own oracles misled.
And as in empty fields the stubble burns,
Or nightly travellers, when day returns,
Their useless torches on dry hedges throw,
That catch the flames, and kindle all the row;
So burns the god, consuming in desire,
And feeding in his breast a fruitless fire:
Her well-turned neck he viewed, (her neck was bare,)
And on her shoulders her dishevelled hair:
"Oh, were it combed," said he, "with what a grace
Would every waving curl become her face!"
He viewed her eyes, like heavenly lamps that shone;
He viewed her lips, too sweet to view alone;
Her taper fingers, and her panting breast:
He praises all he sees; and for the rest,
Believes the beauties yet unseen are best.
Swift as the wind, the damsel fled away,
Nor did for these alluring speeches stay.
"Stay, nymph," he cried; "I follow, not a foe:
Thus from the lion trips the trembling doe;
Thus from the wolf the frightened lamb removes,
And from pursuing falcons fearful doves;
Thou shunn'st a god, and shunn'st a god that loves.

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Ah! lest some thorn should pierce thy tender foot,
Or thou shouldst fall in flying my pursuit,
To sharp uneven ways thy steps decline,
Abate thy speed, and I will bate of mine.
Yet think from whom thou dost so rashly fly;
Nor basely born, nor shepherd's swain am I.
Perhaps thou know'st not my superior state,
And from that ignorance proceeds thy hate.
Me Claros, Delphos, Tenedos, obey;
These hands the Patareian sceptre sway.
The King of gods begot me: what shall be,
Or is, or ever was, in fate, I see.
Mine is the invention of the charming lyre;
Sweet notes, and heavenly numbers, I inspire.
Sure is my bow, unerring is my dart;
But ah! more deadly his, who pierced my heart.
Med'cine is mine, what herbs and simples grow
In fields and forests, all their powers I know,
And am the great physician called below.
Alas, that fields and forests can afford
No remedies to heal their love-sick lord!
To cure the pains of love, no plant avails,
And his own physic the physician fails."
  She heard not half, so furiously she flies,
And on her ear the imperfect accent dies.
Fear gave her wings; and as she fled, the wind
Increasing spread her flowing hair behind;
And left her legs and thighs exposed to view,
Which made the god more eager to pursue.
The god was young, and was too hotly bent
To lose his time in empty compliment;
But led by love, and fired by such a sight,
Impetuously pursued his near delight.
  As when the impatient greyhound, slipt from far,
Bounds o'er the glebe, to course the fearful hare,
She in her speed does all her safety lay,
And he with double speed pursues the prey;

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O'erruns her at the sitting turn, and licks
His chaps in vain, and blows upon the flix; *
She 'scapes, and for the neighbouring covert strives,
And gaining shelter doubts if yet she lives.
If little things with great we may compare,
Such was the god, and such the flying fair:
She, urged by fear, her feet did swiftly move,
But he more swiftly, who was urged by love.
He gathers ground upon her in the chase;
Now breathes upon her hair, with nearer pace,
And just is fastening on the wished embrace.
The nymph grew pale, and in a mortal fright,
Spent with the labour of so long a flight,
And now despairing, cast a mournful look
Upon the streams of her paternal brook:
"Oh, help," she cried, "in this extremest need,
If water-gods are deities indeed!
Gape, earth, and this unhappy wretch entomb,
Or change my form, whence all my sorrows come."
Scarce had she finished, when her feet she found
Benumbed with cold, and fastened to the ground;
A filmy rind about her body grows,
Her hair to leaves, her arms extend to boughs;
The nymph is all into a Laurel gone,
The smoothness of her skin remains alone.
Yet Phœbus loves her still, and, casting round
Her bole his arms, some little warmth he found.
The tree still panted in the unfinished part,
Not wholly vegetive, † and heaved her heart.

* See the same image in the *Annus Mirabilis*—

"With his loll'd tongue he faintly licks his prey,
His warm breath blows her flix up as she lies."

Vol. ix. p. 142.

["Flix" = "down," "fur."—Ed.]

† [Now quite obsolete; before Dryden, used both as noun and adjective.—Ed.]

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He fixed his lips upon the trembling rind;
It swerved aside, and his embrace declined.
To whom the god: "Because thou canst not be
My mistress, I espouse thee for my tree:
Be thou the prize of honour and renown;
The deathless poet, and the poem, crown.
Thou shalt the Roman festivals adorn,
And, after poets, be by victors worn;
Thou shalt returning Cæsar's triumph grace,
When pomps shall in a long procession pass;
Wreathed on the post before his palace wait,
And be the sacred guardian of the gate:
Secure from thunder, and unharmed by Jove,
Unfading as the immortal powers above;
And as the locks of Phœbus are unshorn,
So shall perpetual green thy boughs adorn."
The grateful Tree was pleased with what he said,
And shook the shady honours of her head.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF IO INTO AN HEIFER.

An ancient forest in Thessalia grows,
Which Tempe's pleasant valley does inclose;
Through this the rapid Peneus takes his course,
From Pindus rolling with impetuous force;
Mists from the river's mighty fall arise,
And deadly damps inclose the cloudy skies;
Perpetual fogs are hanging o'er the wood,
And sounds of waters deaf the neighbourhood.
Deep in a rocky cave he makes abode;
A mansion proper for a mourning god.
Here he gives audience; issuing out decrees
To rivers, his dependent deities.
On this occasion hither they resort,
To pay their homage, and to make their court;
All doubtful, whether to congratulate
His daughter's honour, or lament her fate.

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Spercheus, crowned with poplar, first appears;
Then old Apidanus came, crowned with years;
Enipeus turbulent, Amphrysos tame,
And Æas, last, with lagging waters came.
Then of his kindred brooks a numerous throng
Condole his loss, and bring their urns along:
Not one was wanting of the watery train,
That filled his flood, or mingled with the main,
But Inachus, who, in his cave alone,
Wept not another's losses, but his own;
For his dear Io, whether strayed, or dead,
To him uncertain, doubtful tears he shed.
He sought her through the world, but sought in vain;
And nowhere finding, rather feared her slain.
Her, just returning from her father's brook,
Jove had beheld with a desiring look;
And, "Oh, fair daughter of the flood," he said,
"Worthy alone of Jove's imperial bed,
Happy whoever shall those charms possess!
The King of gods (nor is thy lover less,)
Invites thee to yon cooler shades, to shun
The scorching rays of the meridian sun.
Nor shalt thou tempt the dangers of the grove
Alone without a guide; thy guide is Jove.
No puny power, but he, whose high command
Is unconfined, who rules the seas and land,
And tempers thunder in his awful hand.
Oh, fly not!"—for she fled from his embrace
O'er Lerna's pastures; he pursued the chase,
Along the shades of the Lyrcæan plain.
At length the god, who never asks in vain,
Involved with vapours, imitating night,
Both air and earth; and then suppressed her flight,
And, mingling force with love, enjoyed the full delight.

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Meantime the jealous Juno, from on high,
Surveyed the fruitful fields of Arcady;
And wondered that the mist should overrun
The face of daylight and obscure the sun.
No natural cause she found, from brooks or bogs,
Or marshy lowlands, to produce the fogs:
Then round the skies she sought for Jupiter,
Her faithless husband; but no Jove was there.
Suspecting now the worst,—"Or I," she said,
"Am much mistaken, or am much betrayed."
With fury she precipitates her flight,
Dispels the shadows of dissembled night,
And to the day restores his native light.
The almighty lecher, careful to prevent
The consequence, foreseeing her descent,
Transforms his mistress in a trice; and now,
In Io's place, appears a lovely cow.
So sleek her skin, so faultless was her make,
Even Juno did unwilling pleasure take
To see so fair a rival of her love;
And what she was, and whence, inquired of Jove,
Of what fair herd, and from what pedigree?
The god, half-caught, was forced upon a lie,
And said she sprung from earth. She took the word,
And begged the beauteous heifer of her lord.
What should he do? 'twas equal shame to Jove,
Or to relinquish, or betray his love;
Yet to refuse so slight a gift, would be
But more to increase his consort's jealousy.
Thus fear, and love, by turns his heart assailed;
And stronger love had sure at length prevailed,
But some faint hope remained, his jealous queen
Had not the mistress through the heifer seen.
The cautious goddess, of her gift possest,
Yet harboured anxious thoughts within her breast;

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As she, who knew the falsehood of her Jove,
And justly feared some new relapse of love;
Which to prevent, and to secure her care,
To trusty Argus she commits the fair.
  The head of Argus (as with stars the skies,)
Was compassed round, and wore an hundred eyes.
But two by turns their lids in slumber steep;
The rest on duty still their station keep;
Nor could the total constellation sleep.
Thus, ever present to his eyes and mind,
His charge was still before him, though behind.
In fields he suffered her to feed by day;
But, when the setting sun to night gave way,
The captive cow he summoned with a call,
And drove her back, and tied her to the stall.
On leaves of trees and bitter herbs she fed,
Heaven was her canopy, bare earth her bed,
So hardly lodged; and, to digest her food,
She drank from troubled streams, defiled with mud.
Her woful story fain she would have told,
With hands upheld, but had no hands to hold.
Her head to her ungentle keeper bowed,
She strove to speak; she spoke not, but she lowed;
Affrighted with the noise, she looked around,
And seemed to inquire the author of the sound.
  Once on the banks where often she had played,
(Her father's banks,) she came, and there surveyed
Her altered visage, and her branching head;
And starting from herself, she would have fled.
Her fellow-nymphs, familiar to her eyes,
Beheld, but knew her not in this disguise.
Even Inachus himself was ignorant;
And in his daughter did his daughter want.
She followed where her fellows went, as she
Were still a partner of the company:

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They stroke her neck; the gentle heifer stands,
And her neck offers to their stroking hands.
Her father gave her grass; the grass she took,
And licked his palms, and cast a piteous look,
And in the language of her eyes she spoke.
She would have told her name, and asked relief,
But, wanting words, in tears she tells her grief;
Which with her foot she makes him understand,
And prints the name of Io in the sand.
"Ah, wretched me!" her mournful father cried;
She, with a sigh, to "wretched me!" replied.
About her milk-white neck his arms he threw,
And wept, and then these tender words ensue.
"And art thou she, whom I have sought around
The world, and have at length so sadly found?
So found, is worse than lost: with mutual words
Thou answerest not, no voice thy tongue affords;
But sighs are deeply drawn from out thy breast,
And speech, denied, by lowing is expressed.
Unknowing, I prepared thy bridal bed;
With empty hopes of happy issue fed.
But now the husband of a herd must be
Thy mate, and bellowing sons thy progeny.
Oh, were I mortal, death might bring relief!
But now my godhead but extends my grief;
Prolongs my woes, of which no end I see,
And makes me curse my immortality."
More had he said, but fearful of her stay,
The starry guardian drove his charge away
To some fresh pasture; on a hilly height
He sat himself, and kept her still in sight.

THE EYES OF ARGUS TRANSFORMED INTO A PEACOCK'S TRAIN.

Now Jove no longer could her sufferings bear;
But called in haste his airy messenger,

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The son of Maïa, with severe decree
To kill the keeper, and to set her free.
With all his harness soon the god was sped;
His flying hat was fastened on his head;
Wings on his heels were hung, and in his hand
He holds the virtue of the snaky wand.
The liquid air his moving pinions wound,
And, in the moment, shoot him on the ground.
Before he came in sight, the crafty god
His wings dismissed, but still retained his rod:
That sleep-procuring wand wise Hermes took,
But made it seem to sight a shepherd's hook.
With this he did a herd of goats control;
Which by the way he met, and slyly stole.
Clad like a country swain, he piped and sung;
And, playing, drove his jolly troop along.
With pleasure Argus the musician heeds;
But wonders much at those new vocal reeds.
And, "Whosoe'er thou art, my friend," said he,
"Up hither drive thy goats, and play by me;
This hill has browse for them, and shade for thee."
The god, who was with ease induced to climb,
Began discourse to pass away the time;
And still, betwixt, his tuneful pipe he plies,
And watched his hour, to close the keeper's eyes.
With much ado, he partly kept awake;
Not suffering all his eyes repose to take;
And asked the stranger, who did reeds invent,
And whence began so rare an instrument.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF SYRINX INTO REEDS.

Then Hermes thus;—"A nymph of late there was,
Whose heavenly form her fellows did surpass;
The pride and joy of fair Arcadia's plains,
Beloved by deities, adored by swains;

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Syrinx her name, by Sylvans oft pursued,
As oft she did the lustful gods delude:
The rural and the woodland powers disdained;
With Cynthia hunted, and her rites maintained;
Like Phœbe clad, even Phœbe's self she seems,
So tall, so straight, such well-proportioned limbs:
The nicest eye did no distinction know,
But that the goddess bore a golden bow;
Distinguished thus, the sight she cheated too.
Descending from Lycæus, Pan admires
The matchless nymph, and burns with new desires.
A crown of pine upon his head he wore;
And thus began her pity to implore.
But ere he thus began, she took her flight
So swift, she was already out of sight;
Nor stayed to hear the courtship of the god,
But bent her course to Ladon's gentle flood;
There by the river stopt, and, tired before,
Relief from water-nymphs her prayers implore.
"Now while the lustful god, with speedy pace,
Just thought to strain her in a strict embrace,
He fills his arms with reeds, new rising on the place.
And while he sighs his ill success to find,
The tender canes were shaken by the wind;
And breathed a mournful air, unheard before,
That, much surprising Pan, yet pleased him more.
Admiring this new music, 'Thou,' he said,
'Who canst not be the partner of my bed,
At least shall be the consort of my mind,
And often, often, to my lips be joined.'
He formed the reeds, proportioned as they are;
Unequal in their length, and waxed with care,
They still retain the name of his ungrateful fair."

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While Hermes piped, and sung, and told his tale,
The keeper's winking eyes began to fail,
And drowsy slumber on the lids to creep,
Till all the watchman was at length asleep.
Then soon the god his voice and song supprest,
And with his powerful rod confirmed his rest;
Without delay his crooked falchion drew,
And at one fatal stroke the keeper slew.
Down from the rock fell the dissevered head,
Opening its eyes in death, and falling bled;
And marked the passage with a crimson trail:
Thus Argus lies in pieces, cold and pale;
And all his hundred eyes, with all their light,
Are closed at once, in one perpetual night.
These Juno takes, that they no more may fail,
And spreads them in her peacock's gaudy tail.
Impatient to revenge her injured bed,
She wreaks her anger on her rival's head;
With furies frights her from her native home,
And drives her gadding round the world to roam:
Nor ceased her madness and her flight, before
She touched the limits of the Pharian shore.
At length, arriving on the banks of Nile,
Wearied with length of ways, and worn with toil,
She laid her down; and leaning on her knees,
Invoked the cause of all her miseries;
And cast her languishing regards above,
For help from heaven, and her ungrateful Jove.
She sighed, she wept, she lowed; 'twas all she could;
And with unkindness seemed to tax the god.
Last, with an humble prayer, she begged repose,
Or death at least to finish all her woes.
Jove heard her vows, and with a flattering look,
In her behalf to jealous Juno spoke.

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He cast his arms about her neck, and said,
"Dame, rest secure; no more thy nuptial bed
This nymph shall violate; by Styx I swear,
And every oath that binds the Thunderer."
The goddess was appeased; and at the word
Was Io to her former shape restored.
The rugged hair began to fall away;
The sweetness of her eyes did only stay,
Though not so large; her crooked horns decrease;
The wideness of her jaws and nostrils cease;
Her hoofs to hands return, in little space;
The five long taper fingers take their place;
And nothing of the heifer now is seen,
Beside the native whiteness of the skin.
Erected on her feet, she walks again,
And two the duty of the four sustain.
She tries her tongue, her silence softly breaks,
And fears her former lowings when she speaks:
A goddess now through all the Egyptian state,
And served by priests, who in white linen wait.
Her son was Epaphus, at length believed
The son of Jove, and as a god received.
With sacrifice adored, and public prayers,
He common temples with his mother shares.
Equal in years, and rival in renown
With Epaphus, the youthful Phaeton
Like honour claims, and boasts his sire the Sun.
His haughty looks, and his assuming air,
The son of Isis could no longer bear;
"Thou tak'st thy mother's word too far," said he,
"And hast usurped thy boasted pedigree.
Go, base pretender to a borrowed name!"
Thus taxed, he blushed with anger, and with shame;
But shame repressed his rage: the daunted youth
Soon seeks his mother, and inquires the truth.

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"Mother," said he, "this infamy was thrown
By Epaphus on you, and me your son.
He spoke in public, told it to my face,
Nor durst I vindicate the dire disgrace:
Even I, the bold, the sensible of wrong,
Restrained by shame, was forced to hold my tongue;
To hear an open slander, is a curse;
But not to find an answer, is a worse.
If I am heaven-begot, assert your son
By some sure sign, and make my father known,
To right my honour, and redeem your own."
He said, and, saying, cast his arms about
Her neck, and begged her to resolve the doubt.
'Tis hard to judge if Clymene were moved
More by his prayer, whom she so dearly loved,
Or more with fury fired, to find her name
Traduced, and made the sport of common fame.
She stretched her arms to heaven, and fixed her eyes
On that fair planet that adorns the skies;
"Now by those beams," said she, "whose holy fires
Consume my breast, and kindle my desires;
By him who sees us both, and cheers our sight,
By him, the public minister of light,
I swear that Sun begot thee; if I lie,
Let him his cheerful influence deny;
Let him no more this perjured creature see,
And shine on all the world but only me.
If still you doubt your mother's innocence,
His eastern mansion is not far from hence;
With little pains you to his levee go,
And from himself your parentage may know."
With joy the ambitious youth his mother heard,
And, eager for the journey, soon prepared.

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He longs the world beneath him to survey,
To guide the chariot, and to give the day.
From Meroe's burning sands he bends his course,
Nor less in India feels his father's force;
His travel urging, till he came in sight,
And saw the palace by the purple light.

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MELEAGER AND ATALANTA,

OUT OF THE EIGHTH BOOK OF

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

CONNECTION TO THE FORMER STORY.

Ovid, having told how Theseus had freed Athens from the tribute of children, which was imposed on them by Minos, king of Crete, by killing the Minotaur, here makes a digression to the story of Meleager and Atalanta, which is one of the most inartificial connections in all the Metamorphoses; for he only says, that Theseus obtained such honour from that combat, that all Greece had recourse to him in their necessities; and, amongst others, Calydon, though the hero of that country, Prince Meleager, was then living.

From him the Calydonians sought relief;
Though valiant Meleagrus was their chief.
The cause, a boar, who ravaged far and near;
Of Cynthia's wrath, the avenging minister.
For Œnius with autumnal plenty blessed,
By gifts to heaven his gratitude expressed;
Culled sheafs, to Ceres; to Lyæus, wine;
To Pan and Pales, offered sheep and kine;
And fat of olives to Minerva's shrine.
Beginning from the rural gods, his hand
Was liberal to the powers of high command;

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Each deity in every kind was blessed,
Till at Diana's fane the invidious honour ceased.
Wrath touches even the gods; the Queen of Night,
Fired with disdain, and jealous of her right,
"Unhonoured though I am, at least," said she,
"Not unrevenged that impious act shall be."
Swift as the word, she sped the boar away,
With charge on those devoted fields to prey.
No larger bulls the Egyptian pastures feed,
And none so large Sicilian meadows breed:
His eye-balls glare with fire, suffused with blood;
His neck shoots up a thick-set thorny wood;
His bristled back a trench impaled appears,
And stands erected, like a field of spears;
Froth fills his chaps, he sends a grunting sound,
And part he churns, and part befoams the ground;
For tusks with Indian elephants he strove,
And Jove's own thunder from his mouth he drove.
He burns the leaves; the scorching blast invades
The tender corn, and shrivels up the blades;
Or, suffering not their yellow beards to rear,
He tramples down the spikes, and intercepts the year.
In vain the barns expect their promised load,
Nor barns at home, nor ricks are heaped abroad;
In vain the hinds the threshing-floor prepare,
And exercise their flails in empty air.
With olives ever green the ground is strowed,
And grapes ungathered shed their generous blood.
Amid the fold he rages, nor the sheep
Their shepherds, nor the grooms their bulls, can keep.
From fields to walls the frighted rabble run,
Nor think themselves secure within the town;

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Till Meleagrus, and his chosen crew,
Contemn the danger, and the praise pursue.
Fair Leda's twins, (in time to stars decreed,)
One fought on foot, one curbed the fiery steed;
Then issued forth famed Jason after these,
Who manned the foremost ship that sailed the seas;
Then Theseus, joined with bold Pirithous, came;
A single concord in a double name:
The Thestian sons, Idas, who swiftly ran,
And Ceneus, once a woman, now a man.
Lynceus, with eagle's eyes, and lion's heart;
Leucippus, with his never-erring dart;
Acastus, Phileus, Phœnix, Telamon,
Echion, Lelex, and Eurytion,
Achilles' father, and great Phocus' son;
Dryas the fierce, and Hippasus the strong,
With twice-old Iolas, and Nestor then but young;
Laertes active, and Ancæus bold;
Mopsus the sage, who future things foretold;
And t'other seer,* yet by his wife unsold.
A thousand others of immortal fame;
Among the rest, fair Atalanta came,
Grace of the woods: a diamond buckle bound
Her vest behind, that else had flow'd upon the ground,
And show'd her buskin'd legs; her head was bare,
But for her native ornament of hair,
Which in a simple knot was tied above,—
Sweet negligence, unheeded bait of love!
Her sounding quiver on her shoulder tied,
One hand a dart, and one a bow supplied.

* Amphialus. [Amphiaraus.—Ed.]

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Such was her face, as in a nymph displayed
A fair fierce boy, or in a boy betrayed
The blushing beauties of a modest maid.
The Calydonian chief at once the dame
Beheld, at once his heart received the flame,
With heavens averse. "O happy youth," he cried,
"For whom thy fates reserve so fair a bribe!"
He sighed, and had no leisure more to say;
His honour called his eyes another way,
And force him to pursue the now neglected prey.
  There stood a forest on a mountain's brow,
Which overlooked the shaded plains below;
No sounding axe presumed those trees to bite,
Coeval with the world, a venerable sight.
The heroes there arrived, some spread around
The toils, some search the footsteps on the ground,
Some from the chains the faithful dogs unbound.
Of action eager, and intent in thought,
The chiefs their honourable danger sought:
A valley stood below; the common drain
Of waters from above, and falling rain;
The bottom was a moist and marshy ground,
Whose edges were with bending osiers crowned;
The knotty bulrush next in order stood,
And all within, of reeds a trembling wood.
  From hence the boar was roused, and sprung amain,
Like lightning sudden on the warrior-train;
Beats down the trees before him, shakes the ground,
The forest echoes to the crackling sound;
Shout the fierce youth, and clamours ring around.
All stood with their protended * spears prepared,
With broad steel heads the brandished weapons glared.

* [I do not know that this verb occurs before Dryden.—Ed.]

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The beast impetuous with his tusks aside
Deals glancing wounds; the fearful dogs divide;
All spend their mouth aloft, but none abide.
Echion threw the first, but missed his mark,
And stuck his boar-spear on a maple's bark.
Then Jason; and his javelin seemed to take,
But failed with over-force, and whizzed above his back.
Mopsus was next; but, ere he threw, addressed
To Phœbus thus: "O patron, help thy priest!
If I adore, and ever have adored
Thy power divine, thy present aid afford,
That I may reach the beast!"—The god allowed
His prayer, and, smiling, gave him what he could:
He reached the savage, but no blood he drew;
Dian unarmed the javelin as it flew.
This chafed the boar, his nostrils flames expire,
And his red eye-balls roll with living fire.
Whirled from a sling, or from an engine thrown,
Amidst the foes so flies a mighty stone,
As flew the beast: the left wing put to flight,
The chiefs o'erborne, he rushes on the right.
Empalamos and Pelagon he laid
In dust, and next to death, but for their fellows' aid.
Onesimus fared worse, prepared to fly;
The fatal fang drove deep within his thigh,
And cut the nerves; the nerves no more sustain
The bulk; the bulk unpropp'd, falls headlong on the plain.
Nestor had failed the fall of Troy to see,
But, leaning on his lance, he vaulted on a tree;
Then, gathering up his feet, looked down with fear,
And thought his monstrous foe was still too near.
Against a stump his tusk the monster grinds,
And in the sharpened edge new vigour finds;

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Then, trusting to his arms, young Othrys found,
And ranched* his hips with one continued wound.
Now Leda's twins, the future stars, appear;
White were their habits, white their horses were;
Conspicuous both, and both in act to throw,
Their trembling lances brandished at the foe:
Nor had they missed; but he to thickets fled,
Concealed from aiming spears, not pervious to the steed.
But Telamon rushed in, and happed to meet
A rising root, that held his fastened feet;
So down he fell, whom, sprawling on the ground,
His brother from the wooden gyves unbound.
Meantime the virgin-huntress was not slow
To expel the shaft from her contracted bow.
Beneath his ear the fastened arrow stood,
And from the wound appeared the trickling blood.
She blushed for joy: But Meleagrus raised
His voice with loud applause, and the fair archer praised.
He was the first to see, and first to show
His friends the marks of the successful blow.
"Nor shall thy valour want the praises due,"
He said;—a virtuous envy seized the crew.
They shout; the shouting animates their hearts,
And all at once employ their thronging darts;
But out of order thrown, in air they join,
And multitude makes frustrate the design.
With both his hands the proud Ancæus takes,
And flourishes his double biting axe:
Then forward to his fate, he took a stride
Before the rest, and to his fellows cried,—

* [A form of "wrench." "Lanched," Dryden's form of "launce," seems more appropriate.—Ed.]

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"Give place, and mark the difference, if you can,
Between a woman-warrior and a man;
The boar is doomed; nor, though Diana lend
Her aid, Diana can her beast defend."
Thus boasted he; then stretched, on tiptoe stood,
Secure to make his empty promise good;
But the more wary beast prevents the blow,
And upward rips the groin of his audacious foe.
Ancæus falls; his bowels from the wound
Rush out, and clotted blood distains the ground.
Pirithous, no small portion of the war,
Pressed on, and shook his lance; to whom from far,
Thus Theseus cried: "O stay, my better part,
My more than mistress; of my heart, the heart!
The strong may fight aloof: Ancæus tried
His force too near, and by presuming died."
He said, and, while he spake, his javelin threw;
Hissing in air, the unerring weapon flew;
But on an arm of oak, that stood betwixt
The marksman and the mark, his lance he fixt.
Once more bold Jason threw, but failed to wound
The boar, and slew an undeserving hound;
And through the dog the dart was nailed to ground.
Two spears from Meleager's hand were sent,
With equal force, but various in the event;
The first was fixed in earth, the second stood
On the boar's bristled back, and deeply drank his blood.
Now, while the tortured savage turns around,
And flings about his foam, impatient of the wound,
The wound's great author, close at hand, provokes
His rage, and plies him with redoubled strokes;

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Wheels as he wheels, and with his pointed dart
Explores the nearest passage to his heart.
Quick, and more quick, he spins in giddy gyres,
Then falls, and in much foam his soul expires.
This act with shouts heaven high the friendly band
Applaud, and strain in theirs the victor's hand.
Then all approach the slain with vast surprise,
Admire on what a breadth of earth he lies;
And, scarce secure, reach out their spears afar,
And blood their points, to prove their partnership of war.
But he, the conquering chief, his foot impressed
On the strong neck of that destructive beast;
And gazing on the nymph with ardent eyes,
"Accept," said he, "fair Nonacrine, my prize;
And, though inferior, suffer me to join
My labours, and my part of praise, with thine."
At this presents her with the tusky head
And chine, with rising bristles roughly spread.
Glad, she received the gift; and seemed to take
With double pleasure, for the giver's sake.
The rest were seized with sullen discontent,
And a deaf murmur through the squadron went:
All envied; but the Thestian brethren showed
The least respect, and thus they vent their spleen aloud:
"Lay down those honoured spoils, nor think to share,
Weak woman as thou art, the prize of war;
Ours is the title, thine a foreign claim,
Since Meleagrus from our lineage came.
Trust not thy beauty; but restore the prize,
Which he, besotted on that face and eyes,

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Would rend from us." At this, inflamed with spite,
From her they snatch the gift, from him the giver's right.
But soon the impatient prince his falchion drew,
And cried, "Ye robbers of another's due,
Now learn the difference, at your proper cost,
Betwixt true valour, and an empty boast."
At this advanced, and, sudden as the word,
In proud Plexippus' bosom plunged the sword:
Toxeus amazed, and with amazement slow,
Or to revenge, or ward the coming blow,
Stood doubting; and, while doubting thus he stood,
Received the steel bathed in his brother's blood.
Pleased with the first, unknown the second news,
Althæa to the temples pays their dues
For her son's conquest; when at length appear
Her grisly brethren stretched upon the bier:
Pale, at the sudden sight, she changed her cheer,
And with her cheer her robes; but hearing tell
The cause, the manner, and by whom they fell,
'Twas grief no more, or grief and rage were one
Within her soul; at last 'twas rage alone;
Which burning upwards, in succession dries
The tears that stood considering in her eyes.
There lay a log unlighted on the earth:
When she was labouring in the throes of birth
For the unborn chief, the Fatal Sisters came,
And raised it up, and tossed it on the flame;
Then on the rock a scanty measure place
Of vital flax, and turned the wheel apace;
And turning sung,—"To this red brand and thee,
O new-born babe, we give an equal destiny;"

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So vanished out of view. The frighted dame
Sprung hasty from her bed, and quenched the flame;
The log, in secret locked, she kept with care,
And that, while thus preserved, preserved her heir.
This brand she now produced; and first she strows
The hearth with heaps of chips, and after blows;
Thrice heaved her hand, and heaved, she thrice repressed;
The sister and the mother long contest,
Two doubtful titles in one tender breast;
And now her eyes and cheeks with fury glow,
Now pale her cheeks, her eyes with pity flow;
Now low'ring looks presage approaching storms,
And now prevailing love her face reforms:
Resolved, she doubts again; the tears, she dried
With blushing rage, are by new tears supplied;
And, as a ship, which winds and waves assail,
Now with the current drives, now with the gale,
Both opposite, and neither long prevail,
She feels a double force; by turns obeys
The imperious tempest, and the impetuous seas:
So fares Althæa's mind; she first relents
With pity, of that pity then repents:
Sister and mother long the scales divide,
But the beam nodded on the sister's side.
Sometimes she softly sighed, then roared aloud;
But sighs were stifled in the cries of blood.
  The pious impious wretch at length decreed,
To please her brothers' ghosts, her son should bleed;
And when the funeral flames began to rise,
"Receive," she said, "a sister's sacrifice;
A mother's bowels burn:"—high in her hand,
Thus while she spoke, she held the fatal brand;

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Then thrice before the kindled pile she bowed,
And the three Furies thrice invoked aloud:—
"Come, come, revenging sisters, come and view
A sister paying her dead brothers' due;
A crime I punish, and a crime commit;
But blood for blood, and death for death, is fit:
Great crimes must be with greater crimes repaid,
And second funerals on the former laid.
Let the whole household in one ruin fall,
And may Diana's curse o'ertake us all.
Shall fate to happy Œneus still allow
One son, while Thestius stands deprived of two?
Better three lost, than one unpunished go.
Take then, dear ghosts, (while yet, admitted new
In hell, you wait my duty,) take your due;
A costly offering on your tomb is laid,
When with my blood the price of yours is paid.
"Ah! whither am I hurried? Ah! forgive,
Ye shades, and let your sister's issue live:
A mother cannot give him death; though he
Deserves it, he deserves it not from me.
"Then shall the unpunished wretch insult the slain,
Triumphant live? not only live, but reign?
While you, thin shades, the sport of winds, are tost
O'er dreary plains, or tread the burning coast!
I cannot, cannot bear; 'tis past, 'tis done;
Perish this impious, this detested son;
Perish his sire, and perish I withal;
And let the house's heir, and the hoped kingdom fall.
"Where is the mother fled, her pious love,
And where the pains with which ten months I strove!
Ah! hadst thou died, my son, in infant years,
Thy little hearse had been bedewed with tears.

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"Thou livest by me; to me thy breath resign;
Mine is the merit, the demerit thine.
Thy life by double title I require;
Once given at birth, and once preserved from fire:
One murder pay, or add one murder more,
And me to them who fell by thee restore.
"I would, but cannot: my son's image stands
Before my sight;—and now their angry hands
My brothers hold, and vengeance these exact;
This pleads compassion, and repents the fact.
"He pleads in vain, and I pronounce his doom:
My brothers, though unjustly, shall o'ercome;
But having paid their injured ghosts their due,
My son requires my death, and mine shall his pursue."
At this, for the last time, she lifts her hand,
Averts her eyes, and half-unwilling drops the brand.
The brand, amid the flaming fuel thrown,
Or drew, or seemed to draw, a dying groan;
The fires themselves but faintly licked their prey,
Then loathed their impious food, and would have shrunk away.
Just then the hero cast a doleful cry,
And in those absent flames began to fry;
The blind contagion raged within his veins;
But he, with manly patience, bore his pains;
He feared not fate, but only grieved to die
Without an honest wound, and by a death so dry.
"Happy Ancæus," thrice aloud he cried,
"With what becoming fate in arms he died!"
Then called his brothers, sisters, sire, around,
And her to whom his nuptial vows were bound;
Perhaps his mother; a long sigh he drew,
And, his voice failing, took his last adieu;
For, as the flames augment, and as they stay
At their full height, then languish to decay,

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They rise, and sink by fits; at last they soar
In one bright blaze, and then descend no more:
Just so his inward heats, at height, impair,
Till the last burning breath shoots out the soul in air.
Now lofty Calydon in ruins lies;
All ages, all degrees, unsluice their eyes;
And heaven and earth resound with murmurs, groans, and cries.
Matrons and maidens beat their breasts, and tear
Their habits, and root up their scattered hair.
The wretched father, father now no more,
With sorrow sunk, lies prostrate on the floor;
Deforms his hoary locks with dust obscene,
And curses age, and loathes a life prolonged with pain.
By steel her stubborn soul his mother freed,
And punished on herself her impious deed.
Had I a hundred tongues, a wit so large
As could their hundred offices discharge;
Had Phœbus all his Helicon bestowed,
In all the streams inspiring all the god;
Those tongues, that wit, those streams, that god in vain
Would offer to describe his sisters' pain;
They beat their breasts with many a bruising blow,
Till they turn livid, and corrupt the snow.
The corpse they cherish, while the corpse remains,
And exercise and rub with fruitless pains;
And when to funeral flames 'tis borne away,
They kiss the bed on which the body lay;
And when those funeral flames no longer burn,
The dust composed within a pious urn,
Even in that urn their brother they confess,
And hug it in their arms, and to their bosoms press.

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His tomb is raised; then, stretched along the ground,
Those living monuments his tomb surround;
Even to his name, inscribed, their tears they pay,
Till tears and kisses wear his name away.
But Cynthia now had all her fury spent,
Not with less ruin, than a race, content;
Excepting Gorge, perished all the seed,
And her whom heaven for Hercules decreed.
Satiate at last, no longer she pursued
The weeping sisters; but with wings endued,
And horny beaks, and sent to flit in air,
Who yearly round the tomb in feathered flocks repair.

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BAUCIS AND PHILEMON.

OUT OF THE EIGHTH BOOK OF

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

The author, pursuing the deeds of Theseus, relates how he, with his friend Pirithous, were invited by Achelous, the River-God, to stay with him till his waters were abated. Achelous entertains them with a relation of his own love to Perimele, who was changed into an island by Neptune, at his request. Pirithous, being an atheist, derides the legend, and denies the power of the Gods to work that miracle. Lelex, another companion of Theseus, to confirm the story of Achelous, relates another metamorphosis, of Baucis and Philemon into trees, of which he was partly an eye-witness.

THUS Achelous ends; his audience hear
With admiration, and, admiring, fear
The powers of heaven; except Ixion's son,
Who laughed at all the gods, believed in none;
He shook his impious head, and thus replies,—
"These legends are no more than pious lies;
You attribute * too much to heavenly sway,
To think they give us forms, and take away."

* [Observe the accent.—ED.]

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The rest, of better minds, their sense declared
Against this doctrine, and with horror heard.
  Then Lelex rose, an old experienced man,
And thus with sober gravity began ;—
"Heaven's power is infinite; earth, air, and sea,
The manufacture mass, the making power obey.
By proof to clear your doubt;—In Phrygian ground
Two neighbouring trees, with walls encompassed round,
Stand on a moderate rise, with wonder shown,
One a hard oak, a softer linden one;
I saw the place and them, by Pittheus sent
To Phrygian realms, my grandsire's government.
Not far from thence is seen a lake, the haunt
Of coots, and of the fishing cormorant.
Here Jove with Hermes came; but in disguise
Of mortal men concealed their deities;
One laid aside his thunder, one his rod,
And many toilsome steps together trod;
For harbour at a thousand doors they knocked,
Not one of all the thousand but was locked;
At last an hospitable house they found,
A homely shed; the roof, not far from ground,
Was thatched with reeds and straw together bound.
There Baucis and Philemon lived, and there
Had lived long married, and a happy pair;
Now old in love; though little was their store,
Inured to want, their poverty they bore,
Nor aimed at wealth, professing to be poor.
For master or for servant here to call,
Was all alike, where only two were all.
Command was none, where equal love was paid,
Or rather both commanded, both obeyed.
  "From lofty roofs the gods repulsed before,
Now stooping, entered through the little door;

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The man their hearty welcome first expressed,
A common settle* drew for either guest,
Inviting each his weary limbs to rest.
But, ere they sat, officious Baucis lays
Two cushions stuffed with straw, the seat to raise;
Coarse, but the best she had; then takes the load
Of ashes from the hearth, and spreads abroad
The living coals, and, lest they should expire,
With leaves and barks she feeds her infant-fire;
It smokes, and then with trembling breath she blows,
Till in a cheerful blaze the flames arose.
With brushwood and with chips she strengthens these,
And adds at last the boughs of rotten trees.
The fire thus formed, she sets the kettle on,
Like burnished gold the little seether shone;
Next took the coleworts which her husband got
From his own ground, a small well-watered spot;
She stripped the stalks of all their leaves; the best
She culled, and then with handy care she dressed.
High o'er the hearth a chine of bacon hung;
Good old Philemon seized it with a prong,
And from the sooty rafter drew it down,
Then cut a slice, but scarce enough for one;
Yet a large portion of a little store,
Which, for their sake alone, he wished were more.
This in the pot he plunged without delay,
To tame the flesh, and drain the salt away.
The time between, before the fire they sat,
And shortened the delay by pleasing chat.

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* Called in more modern times a *settee*. The old word, *settle*, occurs in the first part of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, where Christian, at the bottom of the Hill of Difficulty, finds an arbour with a *settle*.

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"A beam there was, on which a beechen pail
Hung by the handle, on a driven nail;
This filled with water, gently warmed, they set
Before their guests; in this they bathed their feet,
And after with clean towels dried their sweat:
This done, the host produced the genial bed,
Sallow the foot, the borders, and the stead,*
Which with no costly coverlet they spread,
But coarse old garments; yet such robes as these
They laid alone, at feasts, on holidays.
The good old housewife, tucking up her gown,
The table sets; the invited gods lie down.
The trivet-table of a foot was lame,
A blot which prudent Baucis overcame,
Who thrust beneath the limping leg a sherd,
So was the mended board exactly reared;
Then rubbed it o'er with newly gathered mint,
A wholesome herb, that breathed a grateful scent.
Pallas† began the feast, where first was seen
The party-coloured olive, black and green;
Autumnal cornels next in order served,
In lees of wine well pickled and preserved;
A garden-salad was the third supply,
Of endive, radishes, and succory;
Then curds and cream, the flower of country fare,
And new-laid eggs, which Baucis' busy care
Turned by a gentle fire, and roasted rare.‡
All these in earthenware were served to board;
And, next in place, an earthen pitcher, stored
With liquor of the best the cottage could afford.
This was the table's ornament and pride,
With figures wrought; like pages at his side

* [Properly "place;" then "frame."—Ed.]
† To whom the olive was sacred.
‡ [*Rare*="underdone," "lightly roasted."—Ed.]

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Stood beechen bowls; and these were shining clean,
Varnished with wax without, and lined within.
By this the boiling kettle had prepared,
And to the table sent the smoking lard; *
On which, with eager appetite, they dine,
A savoury bit, that served to relish wine;
The wine itself was suiting to the rest,
Still working in the must, and lately pressed.
The second course succeeds like that before,
Plums, apples, nuts, and, of their wintry-store,
Dry figs and grapes, and wrinkled dates were set
In canisters, to enlarge the little treat;
All these a milk-white honey-comb surround,
Which in the midst the country-banquet crowned.
But the kind hosts their entertainment grace
With hearty welcome, and an open face;
In all they did, you might discern with ease
A willing mind, and a desire to please.
"Mean time the beechen bowls went round, and still,
Though often emptied, were observed to fill;
Filled without hands, and of their own accord
Ran without feet, and danced about the board.
Devotion seized the pair, to see the feast
With wine, and of no common grape, increased;
And up they held their hands, and fell to prayer,
Excusing, as they could, their country fare.
One goose they had, 'twas all they could allow,
A wakeful sentry, and on duty now,
Whom to the gods for sacrifice they vow:
Her, with malicious zeal, the couple viewed;
She ran for life, and, limping, they pursued;
Full well the fowl perceived their bad intent,
And would not make her master's compliment;

* [Bacon, a Gallicism.—Ed.]

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But, persecuted, to the powers she flies,
And close between the legs of Jove she lies.
He, with a gracious ear, the suppliant heard,
And saved her life; then what he was declared,
And owned the god. 'The neighbourhood,' said he,
'Shall justly perish for impiety;
You stand alone exempted; but obey
With speed, and follow where we lead the way;
Leave these accursed, and to the mountain's height
Ascend, nor once look backward in your flight.'
"They haste, and what their tardy feet denied,
The trusty staff (their better leg) supplied.
An arrow's flight they wanted to the top,
And there secure, but spent with travel, stop;
Then turn their now no more forbidden eyes:—
Lost in a lake, the floated level lies;
A watery desert covers all the plains,
Their cot alone, as in an isle, remains:
Wondering, with peeping eyes, while they deplore
Their neighbours' fate, and country now no more,
Their little shed, scarce large enough for two,
Seems, from the ground increased, in height and bulk to grow.
A stately temple shoots within the skies;
The crotchets* of their cot in columns rise;
The pavement polished marble they behold,
The gates with sculpture graced, the spires and tiles of gold.
"Then thus the sire of gods, with looks serene,
'Speak thy desire, thou only just of men;
And thou, O woman, only worthy found
To be with such a man in marriage bound.'

* [*Crotchet*, a "crotch," a forked prop or upright.—Ed.]

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"Awhile they whisper; then, to Jove addressed,
Philemon thus prefers their joint request:—
'We crave to serve before your sacred shrine,
And offer at your altars rites divine;
And since not any action of our life
Has been polluted with domestic strife,
We beg one hour of death; that neither she,
With widow's tears, may live to bury me,
Nor weeping I, with withered arms, may bear
My breathless Baucis to the sepulchre.'
The godheads sign their suit. They run their race
In the same tenour all the appointed space;
Then, when their hour was come, while they relate
These past adventures at the temple-gate,
Old Baucis is by old Philemon seen
Sprouting with sudden leaves of sprightly green;
Old Baucis looked where old Philemon stood,
And saw his lengthened arms a sprouting wood;
New roots their fastened feet begin to bind,
Their bodies stiffen in a rising rind;
Then, ere the bark above their shoulders grew,
They give and take at once their last adieu;
At once, 'Farewell, O faithful spouse,' they said;
At once the encroaching rinds their closing lips invade.
Even yet, an ancient Tyanæan shows
A spreading oak, that near a linden grows;
The neighbourhood confirm the prodigy,
Grave men, not vain of tongue, or like to lie.
I saw myself the garlands on their boughs,
And tablets hung for gifts of granted vows;
And offering fresher up, with pious prayer,
'The good,' said I, 'are God's peculiar care,
And such as honour heaven, shall heavenly honour share.'"

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THE FABLE OF

IPHIS AND IANTHE,

FROM THE NINTH BOOK OF

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

THE fame of this, perhaps, through Crete had flown;
But Crete had newer wonders of her own,
In Iphis changed; for near the Gnossian bounds,
As loud report the miracle resounds,
At Phæstus dwelt a man of honest blood,
But meanly born, and not so rich as good,
Esteemed and loved by all the neighbourhood;
Who to his wife, before the time assigned
For child-birth came, thus bluntly spoke his mind:—
"If heaven," said Lygdus, "will vouchsafe to hear,
I have but two petitions to prefer;
Short pains for thee, for me a son and heir.
Girls cost as many throes in bringing forth;
Beside, when born, the tits * are little worth;

* [Used, like "jade," both of horses and women, but less contemptuously, and only a diminutive in origin.—ED.]

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Weak puling things, unable to sustain
Their share of labour, and their bread to gain.
If, therefore, thou a creature shalt produce,
Of so great charges, and so little use,
Bear witness, heaven, with what reluctancy,
Her hapless innocence I doom to die."
He said, and tears the common grief display,
Of him who bade, and her who must obey.
  Yet Telethusa still persists, to find
Fit arguments to move a father's mind;
To extend his wishes to a larger scope,
And in one vessel not confine his hope.
Lygdus continues hard; her time drew near,
And she her heavy load could scarcely bear;
When slumbering, in the latter shades of night,
Before the approaches of returning light,
She saw, or thought she saw, before her bed,
A glorious train, and Isis at their head;
Her moony horns were on her forehead placed,
And yellow sheaves her shining temples graced;
A mitre, for a crown, she wore on high;
The dog, and dappled bull, were waiting by;
Osiris, sought along the banks of Nile;
The silent god; the sacred Crocodile;
And, last, a long procession moving on,
With timbrels, that assist the labouring moon.
Her slumbers seemed dispelled, and, broad awake,
She heard a voice, that thus distinctly spake:—
"My votary, thy babe from death defend,
Nor fear to save whate'er the gods will send;
Delude with art thy husband's dire decree;
When danger calls, repose thy trust on me;
And know, thou hast not served a thankless deity."
This promise made, with night the goddess fled;
With joy the woman wakes, and leaves her bed;

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Devoutly lifts her spotless hands on high,
And prays the powers their gift to ratify.
Now grinding pains proceed to bearing throes,
Till its own weight the burden did disclose.
'Twas of the beauteous kind, and brought to light
With secrecy, to shun the father's sight.
The indulgent mother did her care employ,
And passed it on her husband for a boy.
The nurse was conscious of the fact alone;
The father paid his vows as for a son;
And called him Iphis, by a common name,
Which either sex with equal right may claim.
Iphis his grandsire was; the wife was pleased,
Of half the fraud by fortune's favour eased;
The doubtful name was used without deceit,
And truth was covered with a pious cheat.
The habit showed a boy, the beauteous face
With manly fierceness mingled female grace.
Now thirteen years of age were swiftly run,
When the fond father thought the time drew on
Of settling in the world his only son.
Ianthe was his choice; so wondrous fair,
Her form alone with Iphis could compare;
A neighbour's daughter of his own degree,
And not more blessed with Fortune's goods than he.
They soon espoused; for they with ease were joined,
Who were before contracted in the mind.
Their age the same, their inclinations too,
And bred together in one school, they grew.
Thus, fatally disposed to mutual fires,
They felt, before they knew, the same desires.
Equal their flame, unequal was their care;
One loved with hope, one languished in despair.

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The maid accused the lingering days alone;
For whom she thought a man, she thought her own.
But Iphis bends beneath a greater grief;
As fiercely burns, but hopes for no relief.
E'en her despair adds fuel to her fire;
A maid with madness does a maid desire.
And, scarce refraining tears, "Alas," said she,
"What issue of my love remains for me!
How wild a passion works within my breast!
With what prodigious flames am I possest!
Could I the care of Providence deserve,
Heaven must destroy me, if it would preserve.
And that's my fate, or sure it would have sent
Some usual evil for my punishment;
Not this unkindly curse; to rage and burn,
Where nature shows no prospect of return.
Nor cows for cows consume with fruitless fire;
Nor mares, when hot, their fellow-mares desire;
The father of the fold supplies his ewes;
The stag through secret woods his hind pursues;
And birds for mates the males of their own species choose.
Her females nature guards from female flame,
And joins two sexes to preserve the game;
Would I were nothing, or not what I am!
Crete, famed for monsters, wanted of her store,
Till my new love produced one monster more.
The daughter of the Sun a bull desired;*
And yet e'en then a male a female fired:
Her passion was extravagantly new;
But mine is much the madder of the two.
To things impossible she was not bent,
But found the means to compass her intent.

* Pasiphae.

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To cheat his eyes she took a different shape;
Yet still she gained a lover, and a leap.
Should all the wit of all the world conspire,
Should Dædalus assist my wild desire,
What art can make me able to enjoy,
Or what can change Ianthe to a boy?
Extinguish then thy passion, hopeless maid,
And recollect thy reason for thy aid.
Know what thou art, and love as maidens ought,
And drive these golden wishes from thy thought.
Thou canst not hope thy fond desires to gain;
Where hope is wanting, wishes are in vain.
And yet no guards against our joys conspire;
No jealous husband hinders our desire;
My parents are propitious to my wish,
And she herself consenting to the bliss.
All things concur to prosper our design;
All things to prosper any love but mine.
And yet I never can enjoy the fair;
'Tis past the power of heaven to grant my prayer.
Heaven has been kind, as far as heaven can be;
Our parents with our own desires agree;
But nature, stronger than the gods above,
Refuses her assistance to my love:
She sets the bar that causes all my pain;
One gift refused makes all their bounty vain.
And now the happy day is just at hand,
To bind our hearts in Hymen's holy band;
Our hearts, but not our bodies; thus accursed,
In midst of water I complain of thirst.
Why comest thou, Juno, to these barren rites,
To bless a bed defrauded of delights?
And why should Hymen lift his torch on high,
To see two brides in cold embraces lie?"
Thus love-sick Iphis her vain passion mourns;
With equal ardour fair Ianthe burns;

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Invoking Hymen's name, and Juno's power,
To speed the work, and haste the happy hour.
She hopes, while Telethusa fears the day,
And strives to interpose some new delay;
Now feigns a sickness, now is in a fright
For this bad omen, or that boding sight.
But having done whate'er she could devise,
And emptied all her magazine of lies,
The time approached; the next ensuing day
The fatal secret must to light betray.
Then Telethusa had recourse to prayer,
She and her daughter with dishevelled hair;
Trembling with fear, great Isis they adored,
Embraced her altar, and her aid implored.
"Fair queen, who dost on fruitful Egypt smile,
Who sway'st the sceptre of the Pharian isle,
And seven-fold falls of disemboguing Nile;
Relieve, in this our last distress," she said,
"A suppliant mother, and a mournful maid.
Thou, goddess, thou wert present to my sight;
Revealed I saw thee by thy own fair light;
I saw thee in my dream, as now I see,
With all thy marks of awful majesty;
The glorious train that compassed thee around;
And heard the hollow timbrel's holy sound.
Thy words I noted, which I still retain;
Let not thy sacred oracles be vain.
That Iphis lives, that I myself am free
From shame and punishment, I owe to thee.
On thy protection all our hopes depend;
Thy counsel saved us, let thy power defend."
Her tears pursued her words, and, while she spoke,
The goddess nodded, and her altar shook;
The temple doors, as with a blast of wind,
Were heard to clap; the lunar horns, that bind

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The brows of Isis, cast a blaze around;
The trembling timbrel made a murmuring sound.
Some hopes these happy omens did impart;
Forth went the mother with a beating heart,
Not much in fear, nor fully satisfied;
But Iphis followed with a larger stride:
The whiteness of her skin forsook her face;
Her looks emboldened with an awful grace;
Her features and her strength together grew,
And her long hair to curling locks withdrew.
Her sparkling eyes with manly vigour shone;
Big was her voice, audacious was her tone.
The latent parts, at length revealed, began
To shoot, and spread, and burnish* into man.
The maid becomes a youth;—no more delay
Your vows, but look, and confidently pay.—
Their gifts the parents to the temple bear;
The votive tables this inscription wear;—
"Iphis, the man, has to the goddess paid
The vows, that Iphis offered when a maid."
Now when the star of day had shown his face,
Venus and Juno with their presence grace
The nuptial rites, and Hymen from above
Descended to complete their happy love;
The gods of marriage lend their mutual aid,
And the warm youth enjoys the lovely maid.

* [This word, as here used = "swell," "grow up," is now quite obsolete or provincial, but it was certainly so used in the seventeenth century. Professor Skeat, to whom I applied as to the possibility of the two words—"burnish" = "brighten," and "burnish" = "grow"—being independent, gives his opinion that it is impossible, which indeed the termination seems to prove, in spite of any temptation that rash philologists may feel to extract a more suitable derivation from the first half of the word. The dialectic use of the word, which is still said to continue, pronounces, if it does not spell, it "barnish."—Ed.]

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PYGMALION AND THE STATUE.

FROM THE TENTH BOOK OF

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

The Propœtides, for their impudent behaviour, being turned into stone by Venus, Pygmalion, Prince of Cyprus, detested all women for their sake, and resolved never to marry. He falls in love with a statue of his own making, which is changed into a maid, whom he marries. One of his descendants is Cinyras, the father of Myrrha; the daughter incestuously loves her own father, for which she is changed into a tree, which bears her name. These two stories immediately follow each other, and are admirably well connected.

PYGMALION, loathing their lascivious life,
Abhorred all womankind, but most a wife;
So single chose to live, and shunned to wed,
Well pleased to want a consort of his bed.
Yet fearing idleness, the nurse of ill,
In sculpture exercised his happy skill;
And carved in ivory such a maid, so fair,
As nature could not with his art compare,
Were she to work; but in her own defence,
Must take her pattern here, and copy hence.
Pleased with his idol, he commends, admires,
Adores; and last, the thing adored desires.

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A very virgin in her face was seen,
And, had she moved, a living maid had been:
One would have thought she could have stirred, but strove
With modesty, and was ashamed to move.
Art, hid with art, so well performed the cheat,
It caught the carver with his own deceit.
He knows 'tis madness, yet he must adore,
And still the more he knows it, loves the more;
The flesh, or what so seems, he touches oft,
Which feels so smooth, that he believes it soft.
Fired with this thought, at once he strained the breast,
And on the lips a burning kiss impressed.
'Tis true, the hardened breast resists the gripe,
And the cold lips return a kiss unripe;
But when, retiring back, he looked again,
To think it ivory was a thought too mean;
So would believe she kissed, and courting more,
Again embraced her naked body o'er;
And, straining hard the statue, was afraid
His hands had made a dint, and hurt his maid;
Explored her, limb by limb, and feared to find
So rude a gripe had left a livid mark behind.
With flattery now he seeks her mind to move,
And now with gifts, the powerful bribes of love:
He furnishes her closet first; and fills
The crowded shelves with rarities of shells;
Adds orient pearls, which from the conchs he drew,
And all the sparkling stones of various hue;
And parrots, imitating human tongue,*
And singing-birds in silver cages hung;

* The parrots are of Dryden's introduction.

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And every fragrant flower, and odorous green,
Were sorted well, with lumps of amber laid between;
Rich fashionable robes her person deck;
Pendants her ears, and pearls adorn her neck;
Her tapered fingers too with rings are graced,
And an embroidered zone surrounds her slender waist.
Thus like a queen arrayed, so richly dressed,
Beauteous she showed, but naked showed the best.
Then from the floor he raised a royal bed,
With coverings of Sidonian purple spread;
The solemn rites performed, he calls her bride,
With blandishments invites her to his side,
And as she were with vital sense possessed,
Her head did on a plumy pillow rest.
  The feast of Venus came, a solemn day,
To which the Cypriots due devotion pay;
With gilded horns the milk-white heifers led,
Slaughtered before the sacred altars, bled;
Pygmalion, offering, first approached the shrine,
And then with prayers implored the powers divine;—
"Almighty Gods, if all we mortals want,
If all we can require, be yours to grant,
Make this fair statue mine,"—he would have said,
But changed his words for shame, and only prayed,
"Give me the likeness of my ivory maid!"—
  The golden Goddess, present at the prayer,
Well knew he meant the inanimated fair,
And gave the sign of granting his desire;
For thrice in cheerful flames ascends the fire.
The youth, returning to his mistress, hies,
And impudent in hope, with ardent eyes,
And beating breast, by the dear statue lies.

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He kisses her white lips, renews the bliss,
And looks and thinks they redden at the kiss;
He thought them warm before: nor longer stays,
But next his hand on her hard bosom lays;
Hard as it was, beginning to relent,
It seemed the breast beneath his fingers bent;
He felt again, his fingers made a print,
'Twas flesh, but flesh so firm, it rose against the dint.
The pleasing task he fails not to renew;
Soft, and more soft at every touch it grew;
Like pliant wax, when chafing hands reduce
The former mass to form, and frame to use.
He would believe, but yet is still in pain,
And tries his argument of sense again,
Presses the pulse, and feels the leaping vein.
Convinced, o'erjoyed, his studied thanks and praise,
To her who made the miracle, he pays;
Then lips to lips he joined; now freed from fear,
He found the savour of the kiss sincere.
At this the wakened image oped her eyes,
And viewed at once the light and lover with surprise.
The goddess, present at the match she made,
So blessed the bed, such fruitfulness conveyed,
That ere ten moons had sharpened either horn,
To crown their bliss, a lovely boy was born;
Paphos his name, who, grown to manhood, walled
The city Paphos, from the founder called.

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CINYRAS AND MYRRHA.

OUT OF THE TENTH BOOK OF

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

There needs no connection of this story with the former, for the beginning of this immediately follows the end of the last. The reader is only to take notice, that Orpheus, who relates both, was by birth a Thracian, and his country far distant from Cyprus, where Myrrha was born, and from Arabia, whither she fled. You will see the reason of this note, soon after the first lines of this fable.

Nor him alone produced the fruitful queen;
But Cinyras, who like his sire had been
A happy prince, had he not been a sire.
Daughters and fathers, from my song retire!
I sing of horror; and, could I prevail,
You should not hear, or not believe my tale.
Yet if the pleasure of my song be such,
That you will hear, and credit me too much,
Attentive listen to the last event,
And with the sin believe the punishment:
Since nature could behold so dire a crime,
I gratulate at least my native clime,

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That such a land, which such a monster bore,
So far is distant from our Thracian shore.
Let Araby extol her happy coast,
Her cinnamon and sweet amomum boast;
Her fragrant flowers, her trees with precious tears,
Her second harvests, and her double years;
How can the land be called so blessed that Myrrha bears?
Not all her odorous tears can cleanse her crime,
Her plant alone deforms the happy clime;
Cupid denies to have inflamed thy heart,
Disowns thy love, and vindicates his dart;
Some fury gave thee those infernal pains,
And shot her venomed vipers in thy veins.
To hate thy sire, had merited a curse;
But such an impious love deserved a worse.
The neighbouring monarchs, by thy beauty led,
Contend in crowds, ambitious of thy bed;
The world is at thy choice, except but one,
Except but him thou canst not choose alone.
She knew it too, the miserable maid,
Ere impious love her better thoughts betrayed,
And thus within her secret soul she said:—
"Ah, Myrrha! whither would thy wishes tend?
Ye Gods, ye sacred laws, my soul defend
From such a crime as all mankind detest,
And never lodged before in human breast!
But is it sin? Or makes my mind alone
The imagined sin? For nature makes it none.
What tyrant then these envious laws began,
Made not for any other beast but man!
The father-bull his daughter may bestride,
The horse may make his mother-mare a bride;
What piety forbids the lusty ram,
Or more salacious goat, to rut their dam?

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The hen is free to wed her chick she bore,
And make a husband, whom she hatched before.
All creatures else are of a happier kind,
Whom nor ill-natured laws from pleasure bind,
Nor thoughts of sin disturb their peace of mind.
But man a slave of his own making lives;
The fool denies himself what nature gives;
Too busy senates, with an over-care
To make us better than our kind can bear,
Have dashed a spice of envy in the laws,
And, straining up too high, have spoiled the cause.
Yet some wise nations break their cruel chains,
And own no laws, but those which love ordains;
Where happy daughters with their sires are joined,
And piety is doubly paid in kind.
O that I had been born in such a clime,
Not here, where 'tis the country makes the crime! . . .
But whither would my impious fancy stray?
Hence hopes, and ye forbidden thoughts, away!
His worth deserves to kindle my desires,
But with the love that daughters bear to sires.
Then had not Cinyras my father been,
What hindered Myrrha's hopes to be his queen?
But the perverseness of my fate is such,
That he's not mine, because he's mine too much:
Our kindred-blood debars a better tie;
He might be nearer, were he not so nigh.
Eyes and their objects never must unite,
Some distance is required to help the sight.
Fain would I travel to some foreign shore,
Never to see my native country more,
So might I to myself myself restore;

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So might my mind these impious thoughts remove,
And, ceasing to behold, might cease to love.
But stay I must, to feed my famished sight,
To talk, to kiss; and more, if more I might: . . .
More, impious maid! What more canst thou design?
To make a monstrous mixture in thy line,
And break all statutes human and divine?
Canst thou be called (to save thy wretched life)
Thy mother's rival, and thy father's wife?
Confound so many sacred names in one,
Thy brother's mother! sister to thy son!
And fear'st thou not to see the infernal bands,
Their heads with snakes, with torches armed their hands,
Full at thy face the avenging brands to bear,
And shake the serpents from their hissing hair?
But thou in time the increasing ill control,
Nor first debauch the body by the soul;
Secure the sacred quiet of thy mind,
And keep the sanctions nature has designed.
Suppose I should attempt, the attempt were vain;
No thoughts like mine his sinless soul profane,
Observant of the right; and O, that he
Could cure my madness, or be mad like me!"
Thus she; but Cinyras, who daily sees
A crowd of noble suitors at his knees,
Among so many, knew not whom to choose,
Irresolute to grant, or to refuse;
But, having told their names, inquired of her,
Who pleased her best, and whom she would prefer?
The blushing maid stood silent with surprise,
And on her father fixed her ardent eyes,

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And, looking, sighed; and, as she sighed, began
Round tears to shed, that scalded as they ran.
The tender sire, who saw her blush, and cry,
Ascribed it all to maiden modesty;
And dried the falling drops, and, yet more kind,
He stroked her cheeks, and holy kisses joined:
She felt a secret venom fire her blood,
And found more pleasure than a daughter should;
And, asked again, what lover of the crew
She liked the best? she answered, "One like you."
Mistaking what she meant, her pious will
He praised, and bade her so continue still:
The word of "pious" heard, she blushed with shame
Of secret guilt, and could not bear the name.
'Twas now the mid of night, when slumbers close
Our eyes, and soothe our cares with soft repose;
But no repose could wretched Myrrha find,
Her body rolling, as she rolled her mind:
Mad with desire, she ruminates her sin,
And wishes all her wishes o'er again:
Now she despairs, and now resolves to try;
Would not, and would again, she knows not why;
Stops and returns, makes and retracts the vow;
Fain would begin, but understands not how:
As when a pine is hewn upon the plains,
And the last mortal stroke alone remains,
Labouring in pangs of death, and threatening all,
This way and that she nods, considering where to fall;
So Myrrha's mind, impelled on either side,
Takes every bent, but cannot long abide:
Irresolute on which she should rely,
At last, unfixed in all, is only fixed to die.
On that sad thought she rests; resolved on death,
She rises, and prepares to choke her breath:

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Then while about the beam her zone she ties,
"Dear Cinyras, farewell," she softly cries;
"For thee I die, and only wish to be
Not hated, when thou know'st I die for thee:
Pardon the crime, in pity to the cause."
This said, about her neck the noose she draws.
The nurse, who lay without, her faithful guard,
Though not the words, the murmurs overheard,
And sighs and hollow sounds; surprised with fright,
She starts, and leaves her bed, and springs a light;
Unlocks the door, and, entering out of breath,
The dying saw, and instruments of death.
She shrieks, she cuts the zone with trembling haste,
And in her arms her fainting charge embraced;
Next (for she now had leisure for her tears)
She weeping asked, in these her blooming years,
What unforeseen misfortune caused her care,
To loathe her life, and languish in despair?
The maid, with downcast eyes, and mute with grief,
For death unfinished, and ill-timed relief,
Stood sullen to her suit: the beldame pressed
The more to know, and bared her withered breast;
Adjured her, by the kindly food she drew
From those dry founts, her secret ill to shew.
Sad Myrrha sighed, and turned her eyes aside;
The nurse still urged, and would not be denied;
Nor only promised secrecy, but prayed
She might have leave to give her offered aid.
"Good will," she said, "my want of strength supplies,
And diligence shall give what age denies.
If strong desires thy mind to fury move,
With charms and medicines I can cure thy love;

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If envious eyes their hurtful rays have cast,
More powerful verse shall free thee from the blast;
If heaven, offended, sends thee this disease,
Offended heaven with prayers we can appease.
What then remains, that can these cares procure?
Thy house is flourishing, thy fortune sure;
Thy careful mother yet in health survives,
And, to thy comfort, thy kind father lives."
The virgin started at her father's name,
And sighed profoundly, conscious of the shame;
Nor yet the nurse her impious love divined,
But yet surmised, that love disturbed her mind.
Thus thinking, she pursued her point, and laid
And lull'd within her lap the mourning maid;
Then softly soothed her thus: "I guess your grief;
You love, my child; your love shall find relief.
My long experienced age shall be your guide;
Rely on that, and lay distrust aside;
No breath of air shall on the secret blow,
Nor shall (what most you fear) your father know."
Struck once again, as with a thunder-clap,
The guilty virgin bounded from her lap,
And threw her body prostrate on the bed,
And, to conceal her blushes, hid her head:
There silent lay, and warned her with her hand
To go; but she received not the command;
Remaining still importunate to know.
Then Myrrha thus: "Or ask no more, or go;
I pr'ythee go, or, staying, spare my shame;
What thou wouldst hear, is impious even to name."
At this, on high the beldame holds her hands,
And trembling, both with age and terror, stands;
Adjures, and, falling at her feet, intreats,
Soothes her with blandishments, and frights with threats,

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To tell the crime intended, or disclose
What part of it she knew, if she no further knows;
And last, if conscious to her counsel made,
Confirms anew the promise of her aid.
  Now Myrrha raised her head; but soon, oppressed
With shame, reclined it on her nurse's breast;
Bathed it with tears, and strove to have confessed:
Twice she began, and stopped; again she tried;
The faltering tongue its office still denied;
At last her veil before her face she spread,
And drew a long preluding sigh, and said,
"O happy mother, in thy marriage bed!" . . .
Then groaned, and ceased.—The good old woman shook,
Stiff were her eyes, and ghastly was her look;
Her hoary hair upright with horror stood,
Made (to her grief) more knowing than she would;
Much she reproached, and many things she said,
To cure the madness of the unhappy maid:
In vain; for Myrrha stood convict of ill;
Her reason vanquished, but unchanged her will;
Perverse of mind, unable to reply,
She stood resolved or to possess, or die.
At length the fondness of a nurse prevailed
Against her better sense, and virtue failed:
"Enjoy, my child, since such is thy desire,
Thy love," she said; she durst not say, "Thy sire."
"Live, though unhappy, live on any terms;"
Then with a second oath her faith confirms.
  The solemn feast of Ceres now was near,
When long white linen stoles the matrons wear;
Ranked in procession walk the pious train,
Offering first-fruits, and spikes of yellow grain;
For nine long nights the nuptial bed they shun,
And, sanctifying harvest, lie alone.

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Mixed with the crowd, the queen forsook her lord,
And Ceres' power with secret rites adored.
The royal couch now vacant for a time,
The crafty crone, officious in her crime,
The curst occasion took; the king she found
Easy with wine, and deep in pleasures drowned,
Prepared for love; the beldame blew the flame,
Confessed the passion, but concealed the name.
Her form she praised; the monarch asked her years,
And she replied, "The same thy Myrrha bears."
Wine and commended beauty fired his thought;
Impatient, he commands her to be brought.
Pleased with her charge performed, she hies her home,
And gratulates the nymph, the task was overcome.
Myrrha was joyed the welcome news to hear;
But, clogged with guilt, the joy was insincere.
So various, so discordant is the mind,
That in our will, a different will we find.
Ill she presaged, and yet pursued her lust;
For guilty pleasures give a double gust.
'Twas depth of night; Arctophylax had driven
His lazy wain half round the northern heaven,
When Myrrha hastened to the crime desired.
The moon beheld her first, and first retired;
The stars, amazed, ran backward from the sight,
And, shrunk within their sockets, lost their light.
Icarius first withdraws his holy flame;
The Virgin sign, in heaven the second name,
Slides down the belt,* and from her station flies,
And night with sable clouds involves the skies.

* [The Zodiac.—Ed.]

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Bold Myrrha still pursues her black intent;
She stumbled thrice, (an omen of the event;)
Thrice shrieked the funeral owl, yet on she went,
Secure of shame, because secure of sight;
Even bashful sins are impudent by night.
Linked hand in hand, the accomplice and the dame,
Their way exploring, to the chamber came;
The door was ope, they blindly grope their way,
Where dark in bed the expecting monarch lay:
Thus far her courage held, but here forsakes;
Her faint knees knock at every step she makes.
The nearer to her crime, the more within
She feels remorse, and horror of her sin;
Repents too late her criminal desire,
And wishes, that unknown she could retire.
Her, lingering thus, the nurse, who feared delay
The fatal secret might at length betray,
Pulled forward, to complete the work begun,
And said to Cinyras,—"Receive thy own!" . . .
Thus saying, she delivered kind to kind,
Accursed, and their devoted bodies joined.
The sire, unknowing of the crime, admits
His bowels, and profanes the hallowed sheets.
He found she trembled, but believed she strove,
With maiden modesty, against her love;
And sought, with flattering words, vain fancies to remove.
Perhaps he said, "My daughter, cease thy fears,"
Because the title suited with her years;
And, "Father," she might whisper him again,
That names might not be wanting to the sin.
Full of her sire, she left the incestuous bed,
And carried in her womb the crime she bred.
Another, and another night she came;
For frequent sin had left no sense of shame;

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Till Cinyras desired to see her face,
Whose body he had held in close embrace,
And brought a taper; the revealer, light,
Exposed both crime, and criminal, to sight.
Grief, rage, amazement, could no speech afford,
But from the sheath he drew the avenging sword;
The guilty fled; the benefit of night,
That favoured first the sin, secured the flight.
Long wandering through the spacious fields, she bent
Her voyage to the Arabian continent;
Then passed the region which Panchæa joined,
And flying left the palmy plains behind.
Nine times the moon had mewed * her horns; at length,
With travel weary, unsupplied with strength,
And with the burden of her womb oppressed,
Sabæan fields afford her needful rest;
There, loathing life, and yet of death afraid,
In anguish of her spirit, thus she prayed:—
"Ye powers, if any so propitious are
To accept my penitence, and hear my prayer,
Your judgments, I confess, are justly sent;
Great sins deserve as great a punishment:
Yet, since my life the living will profane,
And since my death the happy dead will stain,
A middle state your mercy may bestow,
Betwixt the realms above, and those below;
Some other form to wretched Myrrha give,
Nor let her wholly die, nor wholly live."
The prayers of penitents are never vain;
At least, she did her last request obtain;

[* The reader may be reminded that the two very different senses of this—"shed" in thec ative, "cooped up" in he passive—are not arbitrary or unconnected. The hawk is caged, "mewed," when she moults or "mews" (*muer, mutare*).—Ed.]

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For, while she spoke, the ground began to rise,
And gathered round her feet, her legs, and thighs;
Her toes in roots descend, and, spreading wide,
A firm foundation for the trunk provide;
Her solid bones convert to solid wood,
To pith her marrow, and to sap her blood;
Her arms are boughs, her fingers change their kind,
Her tender skin is hardened into rind.
And now the rising tree her womb invests,
Now, shooting upwards still, invades her breasts,
And shades the neck; and, weary with delay,
She sunk her head within, and met it half the way.
And though with outward shape she lost her sense,
With bitter tears she wept her last offence;
And still she weeps, nor sheds her tears in vain;
For still the precious drops her name retain.
Mean time the misbegotten infant grows,
And, ripe for birth, distends with deadly throes
The swelling rind, with unavailing strife,
To leave the wooden womb, and pushes into life.
The mother-tree, as if oppressed with pain,
Writhes here and there, to break the bark, in vain;
And, like a labouring woman, would have prayed,
But wants a voice to call Lucina's aid;
The bending bole sends out a hollow sound,
And trickling tears fall thicker on the ground.
The mild Lucina came uncalled, and stood
Beside the struggling boughs, and heard the groaning wood;
Then reached her midwife-hand, to speed the throes,
And spoke the powerful spells that babes to birth disclose.

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The bark divides, the living load to free,
And safe delivers the convulsive tree.
The ready nymphs receive the crying child,
And wash him in the tears the parent plant distilled.
They swathed him with their scarfs; beneath him spread
The ground with herbs; with roses raised his head.
The lovely babe was born with every grace;
Even envy must have praised so fair a face:
Such was his form, as painters, when they show
Their utmost art, on naked loves bestow;
And that their arms no difference might betray,
Give him a bow, or his from Cupid take away.
Time glides along, with undiscovered haste,
The future but a length behind the past,
So swift are years; the babe, whom just before
His grandsire got, and whom his sister bore;
The drop, the thing which late the tree inclosed,
And late the yawning bark to life exposed;
A babe, a boy, a beauteous youth appears;*
And lovelier than himself at riper years.
Now to the queen of love he gave desires,
And, with her pains, revenged his mother's fires.

* Adonis.

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CEYX AND ALCYONE.

OUT OF THE TENTH [ELEVENTH] BOOK OF

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

CONNECTION OF THIS FABLE WITH THE FORMER.

Ceyx, the son of Lucifer (the Morning Star), and King of Trachin, in Thessaly, was married to Alcyone, daughter to Æolus, god of the winds. Both the husband and the wife loved each other with an entire affection. Dædalion, the elder brother of Ceyx, whom he succeeded, having been turned into a falcon by Apollo, and Chione, Dædalion's daughter, slain by Diana, Ceyx prepares a ship to sail to Claros, there to consult the oracle of Apollo, and (as Ovid seems to intimate) to inquire how the anger of the Gods might be atoned.

THESE prodigies afflict the pious prince;
But, more perplexed with those that happened since,
He purposes to seek the Clarian God,
Avoiding Delphos, his more famed abode;
Since Phlegian robbers made unsafe the road.
Yet could not he from her he loved so well,
The fatal voyage, he resolved, conceal;
But when she saw her lord prepared to part,
A deadly cold ran shivering to her heart;

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Her faded cheeks are changed to boxen hue,
And in her eyes the tears are ever new;
She thrice essayed to speak; her accents hung,
And, faltering, died unfinished on her tongue,
Or vanished into sighs; with long delay
Her voice returned; and found the wonted way.
"Tell me, my lord," she said, "what fault unknown
Thy once beloved Alcyone has done?
Whither, ah whither is thy kindness gone!
Can Ceyx then sustain to leave his wife,
And unconcerned forsake the sweets of life?
What can thy mind to this long journey move,
Or need'st thou absence to renew thy love?
Yet, if thou goest by land, though grief possess
My soul even then, my fears will be the less.
But ah! be warned to shun the watery way,
The face is frightful of the stormy sea.
For late I saw adrift disjointed planks,
And empty tombs erected on the banks.
Nor let false hopes to trust betray thy mind,
Because my sire in caves constrains the wind,
Can with a breath their clamorous rage appease,
They fear his whistle, and forsake the seas:
Not so; for, once indulged, they sweep the main,
Deaf to the call, or, hearing, hear in vain;
But bent on mischief, bear the waves before,
And, not content with seas, insult the shore;
When ocean, air, and earth, at once engage,
And rooted forests fly before their rage;
At once the clashing clouds to battle move,
And lightnings run across the fields above:
I know them well, and marked their rude comport,
While yet a child, within my father's court;
In times of tempest they command alone,
And he but sits precarious on the throne;

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The more I know, the more my fears augment,
And fears are oft prophetic of the event.
But if not fears, or reasons will prevail,
If fate has fixed thee obstinate to sail,
Go not without thy wife, but let me bear
My part of danger with an equal share,
And present what I suffer * only fear;
Then o'er the bounding billows shall we fly,
Secure to live together, or to die."
These reasons moved her starlike† husband's heart,
But still he held his purpose to depart;
For as he loved her equal to his life,
He would not to the seas expose his wife;
Nor could be wrought his voyage to refrain,
But sought by arguments to soothe her pain:
Nor these availed; at length he lights on one,
With which so difficult a cause he won:—
"My love, so short an absence cease to fear,
For, by my father's holy flame I swear,
Before two moons their orb with light adorn,
If heaven allow me life, I will return."
This promise of so short a stay prevails;
He soon equips the ship, supplies the sails,
And gives the word to launch; she trembling views
This pomp of death, and parting tears renews;
Last, with a kiss, she took a long farewell,
Sighed, with a sad presage, and swooning fell.
While Ceyx seeks delays, the lusty crew,
Raised on their banks, their oars in order drew
To their broad breasts,—the ship with fury flew.

* [This appears in Scott as "suffer what I"—a plausible but incorrect alteration.—Ed.]

† [So in Ovid, "*sidereus*;" Ceyx was the son of Lucifer.—Ed.]

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The queen, recovered, rears her humid eyes,
And first her husband on the poop espies,
Shaking his hand at distance on the main;
She took the sign, and shook her hand again.
Still as the ground recedes, retracts * her view
With sharpened sight, till she no longer knew
The much-loved face; that comfort lost, supplies
With less, and with the galley feeds her eyes;
The galley borne from view by rising gales,
She followed with her sight the flying sails;
When even the flying sails were seen no more,
Forsaken of all sight, she left the shore.
Then on her bridal bed her body throws,
And sought in sleep her wearied eyes to close;
Her husband's pillow, and the widowed part
Which once he pressed, renewed the former smart.
And now a breeze from shore began to blow;
The sailors ship their oars, and cease to row;
Then hoist their yards atrip,† and all their sails
Let fall, to court the wind, and catch the gales.
By this the vessel half her course had run,
And as much rested till the rising sun;
Both shores were lost to sight, when at the close
Of day, a stiffer gale at east arose;
The sea grew white, the rolling waves from far,
Like heralds, first denounce the watery war.
This seen, the master soon began to cry,
"Strike, strike the top-sail; let the main sheet fly,
And furl your sails." The winds repel the sound,
And in the speaker's mouth the speech is drowned.
Yet of their own accord, as danger taught,
Each in his way, officiously they wrought;
Some stow their oars, or stop the leaky sides;
Another, bolder yet, the yard bestrides,

* [="repeats," a Latinism.—Ed.]
† [To the top of the mast.—Ed.]

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And folds the sails; a fourth, with labour, laves
The intruding seas, and waves ejects on waves.
In this confusion while their work they ply,
The winds augment the winter of the sky,
And wage intestine wars; the suffering seas
Are tossed, and mingled as their tyrants please.
The master would command, but, in despair
Of safety, stands amazed with stupid care,
Nor what to bid, or what forbid, he knows,
The ungoverned tempest to such fury grows;
Vain is his force, and vainer is his skill,
With such a concourse comes the flood of ill;
The cries of men are mixed with rattling shrouds;
Seas dash on seas, and clouds encounter clouds;
At once from east to west, from pole to pole,
The forky lightnings flash, the roaring thunders roll.
Now waves on waves ascending scale the skies,
And, in the fires, above the water fries;
When yellow sands are sifted from below,
The glittering billows give a golden show;
And when the fouler bottom spews the black,
The Stygian dye the tainted waters take;
Then frothy white appear the flatted seas,
And change their colour, changing their disease.
Like various fits the Trachin vessel finds,
And now sublime she rides upon the winds;
As from a lofty summit looks from high,
And from the clouds beholds the nether sky;
Now from the depth of hell they lift their sight,
And at a distance see superior light;
The lashing billows make a loud report,
And beat her sides, as battering rams a fort;
Or as a lion, bounding in his way,
With force augmented bears against his prey,
Sidelong to seize; or, unappalled with fear,
Springs on the toils, and rushes on the spear;

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So seas impelled by winds, with added power,
Assault the sides, and o'er the hatches tower.
The planks, their pitchy coverings washed away,
Now yield; and now a yawning breach display;
The roaring waters with a hostile tide
Rush through the ruins of her gaping side.
Meantime, in sheets of rain the sky descends,
And ocean, swelled with waters, upwards tends,
One rising, falling one; the heavens and sea
Meet at their confines, in the middle way;
The sails are drunk with showers, and drop with rain,
Sweet waters mingle with the briny main.
No star appears to lend his friendly light;
Darkness and tempest make a double night;
But flashing fires disclose the deep by turns,
And, while the lightnings blaze, the water burns.
Now all the waves their scattered force unite;
And, as a soldier, foremost in the fight,
Makes way for others, and, an host alone,
Still presses on, and, urging, gains the town;
So while the invading billows come abreast,
The hero tenth,* advanced before the rest,
Sweeps all before him with impetuous sway,
And from the walls descends upon the prey;
Part following enter, part remain without,
With envy hear their fellows' conquering shout,
And mount on others' backs, in hope to share
The city, thus become the seat of war.
An universal cry resounds aloud,
The sailors run in heaps, a helpless crowd;
Art fails, and courage falls, no succour near;
As many waves, as many deaths appear.

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* [*Fluctus decumanus.*—Ed.]

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One weeps, and yet despairs of late relief;
One cannot weep, his fears congeal his grief;
But, stupid, with dry eyes expects his fate.
One with loud shrieks laments his lost estate,
And calls those happy whom their funerals wait.
This wretch with prayers and vows the gods implores,
And even the skies he cannot see, adores.
That other on his friends his thoughts bestows,
His careful father, and his faithful spouse.
The covetous worldling in his anxious mind
Thinks only on the wealth he left behind.
All Ceyx his Alcyone employs,
For her he grieves, yet in her absence joys;
His wife he wishes, and would still be near,
Not her with him, but wishes him with her:
Now with last looks he seeks his native shore,
Which fate has destined him to see no more;
He sought, but in the dark tempestuous night
He knew not whither to direct his sight.
So whirl the seas, such darkness blinds the sky,
That the black night receives a deeper dye.
The giddy ship ran round; the tempest tore
Her mast, and over-board the rudder bore.
One billow mounts; and with a scornful brow,
Proud of her conquest gained, insults the waves below;
Nor lighter falls, than if some giant tore
Pindus and Athos, with the freight they bore,
And tossed on seas; pressed with the ponderous blow,
Down sinks the ship within the abyss below;
Down with the vessel sink into the main
The many, never more to rise again.
Some few on scattered planks with fruitless care
Lay hold, and swim; but, while they swim, despair.

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Even he, who late a sceptre did command,
Now grasps a floating fragment in his hand;
And while he struggles on the stormy main,
Invokes his father, and his wife, in vain:
But yet his consort is his greatest care;
Alcyone he names amidst his prayer;
Names as a charm against the waves and wind,
Most in his mouth, and ever in his mind.
Tired with his toil, all hopes of safety past,
From prayers to wishes he descends at last,—
That his dead body, wafted to the sands,
Might have its burial from her friendly hands.
As oft as he can catch a gulp of air,
And peep above the seas, he names the fair;
And, even when plunged beneath, on her he raves,
Murmuring Alcyone below the waves:
At last a falling billow stops his breath,
Breaks o'er his head, and whelms him underneath.
Bright Lucifer * unlike himself appears
That night, his heavenly form obscured with tears;
And since he was forbid to leave the skies,
He muffled with a cloud his mournful eyes.
Meantime Alcyone (his fate unknown)
Computes how many nights he had been gone;
Observes the waning moon with hourly view,
Numbers her age, and wishes for a new;
Against the promised time provides with care,
And hastens in the woof the robes he was to wear;
And for herself employs another loom,
New-dressed to meet her lord returning home,
Flattering her heart with joys that never were to come.

* Ceyx was the son of the Morning Star.

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She fumed the temples with an odorous flame,
And oft before the sacred altars came,
To pray for him, who was an empty name;
All powers implored, but far above the rest,
To Juno she her pious vows addressed,
Her much-loved lord from perils to protect,
And safe o'er seas his voyage to direct;
Then prayed that she might still possess his heart,
And no pretending rival share a part.
This last petition heard, of all her prayer;
The rest, dispersed by winds, were lost in air.
But she, the goddess of the nuptial bed,
Tired with her vain devotions for the dead,
Resolved the tainted hand should be repelled,
Which incense offered, and her altar held:
Then Iris thus bespoke,—"Thou faithful maid,
By whom the queen's commands are well conveyed,
Haste to the house of Sleep, and bid the god,
Who rules the night by visions with a nod,
Prepare a dream, in figure and in form
Resembling him who perished in the storm:
This form before Alcyone present,
To make her certain of the sad event."
Endued with robes of various hue she flies,
And flying draws an arch, a segment of the skies;
Then leaves her bending bow, and from the steep
Descends to search the silent house of Sleep.
Near the Cimmerians, in his dark abode,
Deep in a cavern, dwells the drowsy god;
Whose gloomy mansion nor the rising sun,
Nor setting, visits, nor the lightsome noon;
But lazy vapours round the region fly,
Perpetual twilight, and a doubtful sky;
No crowing cock does there his wings display,
Nor with his horny bill provoke the day;

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Nor watchful dogs, nor the more wakeful geese,
Disturb with nightly noise the sacred peace;
Nor beast of nature,* nor the tame, are nigh,
Nor trees with tempests rocked, nor human cry;
But safe repose, without an air of breath,
Dwells here, and a dumb quiet next to death.
An arm of Lethe, with a gentle flow,
Arising upwards from the rock below,
The palace moats, and o'er the pebbles creeps,
And with soft murmurs calls the coming sleeps;
Around its entry nodding poppies grow,
And all cool simples that sweet rest bestow;
Night from the plants their sleepy virtue drains,
And passing sheds it on the silent plains:
No door there was the unguarded house to keep,
On creaking hinges turned, to break his sleep.
But in the gloomy court was raised a bed,
Stuffed with black plumes, and on an ebon stead;
Black was the covering too, where lay the god,
And slept supine, his limbs displayed abroad;
About his head fantastic visions fly,
Which various images of things supply,
And mock their forms; the leaves on trees not more,
Nor bearded ears in fields, nor sands upon the shore.
The virgin, entering bright, indulged† the day
To the brown cave, and brushed the dreams away;
The god, disturbed with this new glare of light
Cast sudden on his face, unsealed his sight,
And raised his tardy head, which sunk again,
And, sinking on his bosom, knocked his chin;

* [*Ferœ naturæ*, translated rather *ad lib.*—Ed.]
† [A Latinism, but not in Ovid; indeed the construction is not Augustan.—Ed.]

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At length shook off himself, and asked the dame
(And asking yawned), for what intent she came?
To whom the goddess thus:—"O sacred Rest,
Sweet pleasing Sleep, of all the powers the best!
O peace of mind, repairer of decay,
Whose balms renew the limbs to labours of the day,
Care shuns thy soft approach, and sullen flies away!
Adorn a dream, expressing human form,
The shape of him who suffered in the storm,
And send it flitting to the Trachin court,
The wreck of wretched Ceyx to report:
Before his queen bid the pale spectre stand,
Who begs a vain relief at Juno's hand."
She said, and scarce awake her eyes could keep,
Unable to support the fumes of sleep;
But fled, returning by the way she went,
And swerved along her bow with swift ascent.
The god, uneasy till he slept again,
Resolved at once to rid himself of pain;
And, though against his custom, called aloud,
Exciting Morpheus from the sleepy crowd;
Morpheus, of all his numerous train, expressed
The shape of man, and imitated best;
The walk, the words, the gesture could supply,
The habit mimic, and the mien belie;
Plays well, but all his action is confined;
Extending not beyond our human kind.
Another birds, and beasts, and dragons apes,
And dreadful images, and monster shapes:
This dæmon, Icelos, in heaven's high hall
The gods have named; but men Phobetor call:
A third is Phantasus, whose actions roll
On meaner thoughts, and things devoid of soul;
Earth, fruits, and flowers, he represents in dreams,
And solid rocks unmoved, and running streams.

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These three to kings and chiefs their scenes display,
The rest before the ignoble commons play:
Of these the chosen Morpheus is dispatched;
Which done, the lazy monarch overwatched,
Down from his propping elbow drops his head,
Dissolved in sleep, and shrinks within his bed.
Darkling the dæmon glides, for flight prepared,
So soft that scarce his fanning wings are heard.
To Trachin, swift as thought, the flitting shade
Through air his momentary journey made:
Then lays aside the steerage of his wings,
Forsakes his proper form, assumes the king's;
And pale as death, despoiled of his array,
Into the queen's apartment takes his way,
And stands before the bed at dawn of day:
Unmoved his eyes, and wet his beard appears,
And shedding vain, but seeming real tears;
The briny water dropping from his hairs;
Then staring on her, with a ghastly look
And hollow voice, he thus the queen bespoke:
"Knowest thou not me? Not yet, unhappy wife?
Or are my features perished with my life?
Look once again, and for thy husband lost,
Lo! all that 's left of him, thy husband's ghost!
Thy vows for my return were all in vain;
The stormy south o'ertook us in the main;
And never shalt thou see thy loving lord again.
Bear witness, heaven, I called on thee in death,
And, while I called, a billow stopped my breath.
Think not that flying fame reports my fate;
I, present I, appear, and my own wreck relate.
Rise, wretched widow, rise, nor undeplored
Permit my ghost to pass the Stygian ford;
But rise, prepared in black to mourn thy perished lord."

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Thus said the player god; and, adding art
Of voice and gesture, so performed his part,
She thought (so like her love the shade appears)
That Ceyx spake the words, and Ceyx shed the tears.
She groaned, her inward soul with grief opprest,
She sighed, she wept, and sleeping beat her breast:
Then stretched her arms to embrace his body bare,
Her clasping arms inclose but empty air:
At this, not yet awake, she cried, "Oh stay,
One is our fate, and common is our way!"
So dreadful was the dream, so loud she spoke,
That, starting sudden up, the slumber broke;
Then cast her eyes around, in hope to view
Her vanished lord, and find the vision true;
For now the maids, who waited her commands,
Ran in with lighted tapers in their hands.
Tired with the search, not finding what she seeks,
With cruel blows she pounds her blubbered cheeks;
Then from her beaten breast the linen tare,
And cut the golden caul that bound her hair.
Her nurse demands the cause; with louder cries
She prosecutes her griefs, and thus replies:
"No more Alcyone, she suffered death
With her loved lord, when Ceyx lost his breath:
No flattery, no false comfort, give me none,
My shipwrecked Ceyx is for ever gone;
I saw, I saw him manifest in view,
His voice, his figure, and his gestures knew:
His lustre lost, and every living grace,
Yet I retained the features of his face:
Though with pale cheeks, wet beard, and dropping hair,
None but my Ceyx could appear so fair;

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I would have strained him with a strict embrace,
But through my arms he slipt, and vanished from the place;
There, even just there he stood;"—and as she spoke,
Where last the spectre was, she cast her look;
Fain would she hope, and gazed upon the ground,
If any printed footsteps might be found;
Then sighed, and said—"This I too well foreknew,
And my prophetic fear presaged too true;
'Twas what I begged, when with a bleeding heart
I took my leave, and suffered thee to part,
Or I to go along, or thou to stay,
Never, ah never to divide our way!
Happier for me, that, all our hours assigned,
Together we had lived, even not in death disjoined!
So had my Ceyx still been living here,
Or with my Ceyx I had perished there;
Now I die absent, in the vast profound,
And me without myself the seas have drowned:
The storms were not so cruel; should I strive
To lengthen life, and such a grief survive!
But neither will I strive, nor wretched thee
In death forsake, but keep thee company.
If not one common sepulchre contains
Our bodies, or one urn our last remains,
Yet Ceyx and Alcyone shall join,
Their names remembered in one common line."
No further voice her mighty grief affords,
For sighs come rushing in betwixt her words,
And stopt her tongue; but what her tongue denied,
Soft tears, and groans, and dumb complaints supplied.

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'Twas morning; to the port she takes her way,
And stands upon the margin of the sea;
That place, that very spot of ground she sought,
Or thither by her destiny was brought,
Where last he stood; and while she sadly said,
"'Twas here he left me, lingering here, delayed
His parting kiss, and there his anchors weighed."
Thus speaking, while her thoughts past actions trace,
And call to mind, admonished by the place,
Sharp at her utmost ken she cast her eyes,
And somewhat floating from afar descries;
It seemed a corpse adrift, to distant sight,
But at a distance who could judge aright?
It wafted nearer yet, and then she knew,
That what before she but surmised was true;
A corpse it was, but whose it was, unknown,
Yet moved, howe'er, she made the case her own;
Took the bad omen of a shipwrecked man,
As for a stranger wept, and thus began:
"Poor wretch, on stormy seas to lose thy life,
Unhappy thou, but more thy widowed wife!"
At this she paused; for now the flowing tide
Had brought the body nearer to the side:
The more she looks, the more her fears increase
At nearer sight, and she 's herself the less:
Now driven ashore, and at her feet it lies;
She knows too much, in knowing whom she sees,—
Her husband's corpse; at this she loudly shrieks,
"'Tis he, 'tis he," she cries, and tears her cheeks,
Her hair, her vest; and, stooping to the sands,
About his neck she casts her trembling hands.
"And is it thus, O dearer than my life,
Thus, thus return'st thou to thy longing wife!"

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She said, and to the neighbouring mole she strode,
Raised there to break the incursions of the flood;
Headlong from hence to plunge herself she springs,
But shoots along supported on her wings;
A bird new-made about the banks she plies,
Not far from shore, and short excursions tries;
Nor seeks in air her humble flight to raise,
Content to skim the surface of the seas;
Her bill, though slender, sends a creaking noise,
And imitates a lamentable voice;
Now lighting where the bloodless body lies,
She with a funeral note renews her cries.
At all her stretch her little wings she spread,
And with her feathered arms embraced the dead;
Then flickering to his pallid lips, she strove
To print a kiss, the last essay of love;
Whether the vital touch revived the dead,
Or that the moving waters raised his head
To meet the kiss, the vulgar doubt alone,
For sure a present miracle was shown.
The gods their shapes to winter-birds translate,
But both obnoxious to their former fate.
Their conjugal affection still is tied,
And still the mournful race is multiplied;
They bill, they tread; Alcyone compressed,
Seven days sits brooding on her floating nest,
A wintry queen: her sire at length is kind,
Calms every storm, and hushes every wind;
Prepares his empire for his daughter's ease,
And for his hatching nephews * smooths the seas.

* [In the sense of *nepotes* and *neveux*, "descendants."—Ed.]

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ÆSACUS TRANSFORMED

INTO A CORMORANT.

FROM THE ELEVENTH BOOK OF

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

THESE some old man sees wanton in the air,
And praises the unhappy constant pair;
Then to his friend the long-necked Cormorant shows,
The former tale reviving other woes:
"That sable bird," he cries, "which cuts the flood
With slender legs, was once of royal blood;
His ancestors from mighty Tros proceed,
The brave Laomedon and Ganymede,
Whose beauty tempted Jove to steal the boy,
And Priam, hapless prince! who fell with Troy;
Himself was Hector's brother, and, had fate
But given this hopeful youth a longer date,
Perhaps had rivalled warlike Hector's worth,
Though on the mother's side of meaner birth;
Fair Alyxothoé,* a country maid,
Bare Æsacus by stealth in Ida's shade.

* [Alexirrhoë.—ED.]

He fled the noisy town, and pompous court,
Loved the lone hills, and simple rural sport,
And seldom to the city would resort.
Yet he no rustic clownishness profest,
Nor was soft love a stranger to his breast;
The youth had long the nymph Hesperie wooed,
Oft through the thicket, or the mead, pursued.
Her haply on her father's bank he spied,
While fearless she her silver tresses dried;
Away she fled; not stags with half such speed,
Before the prowling wolf, scud o'er the mead;
Not ducks, when they the safer flood forsake,
Pursued by hawks, so swift regain the lake,
As fast he followed in the hot career;
Desire the lover winged, the virgin fear.
A snake unseen now pierced her heedless foot,
Quick through the veins the venomed juices shoot;
She fell, and 'scaped by death his fierce pursuit.
Her lifeless body, frighted, he embraced,
And cried, "Not this I dreaded, but thy haste;
O had my love been less, or less thy fear!
The victory thus bought is far too dear.
Accursed snake! yet I more cursed than he!
He gave the wound; the cause was given by me.
Yet none shall say, that unrevenged you died."
He spoke; then climbed a cliff's o'erhanging side,
And, resolute, leaped on the foaming tide.
Tethys received him gently on the wave;
The death he sought denied, and feathers gave.
Debarred the surest remedy of grief,
And forced to live, he curst the unasked relief;
Then on his airy pinions upward flies,
And at a second fall successless tries,
The downy plume a quick descent denies.

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Enraged, he often dives beneath the wave,
And there in vain expects to find a grave.
His ceaseless sorrow for the unhappy maid
Meagred his look, and on his spirits preyed.
Still near the sounding deep he lives; his name * 55
From frequent diving and emerging came.

* [Mergus.—Ed.]

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THE TWELFTH BOOK

OF

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES,

WHOLLY TRANSLATED.

CONNECTION TO THE END OF THE ELEVENTH BOOK.

Æsacus, the son of Priam, loving a country life, forsakes the court; living obscurely, he falls in love with a nymph, who, flying from him, was killed by a serpent; for grief of this, he would have drowned himself; but, by the pity of the gods, is turned into a Cormorant. Priam, not hearing of Æsacus, believes him to be dead, and raises a tomb to preserve his memory. By this transition, which is one of the finest in all Ovid, the poet naturally falls into the story of the Trojan War, which is summed up in the present book; but so very briefly in many places, that Ovid seems more short than Virgil, contrary to his usual style. Yet the House of Fame, which is here described, is one of the most beautiful pieces in the whole Metamorphoses. The fight of Achilles and Cygnus, and the fray betwixt the Lapithæ and Centaurs, yield to no other part of this poet; and particularly the loves and death of Cyllarus and Hylonome, the male and female Centaur, are wonderfully moving.

PRIAM, to whom the story was unknown,
As dead, deplored his metamorphosed son;
A Cenotaph his name and title kept,
And Hector round the tomb, with all his brothers, wept.

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This pious office Paris did not share;
Absent alone, and author of the war,
Which, for the Spartan queen, the Grecians drew
To avenge the rape, and Asia to subdue.
A thousand ships were manned, to sail the sea;
Nor had their just resentments found delay,
Had not the winds and waves opposed their way.
At Aulis, with united powers, they meet,
But there, cross winds or calms detained the fleet.
Now, while they raise an altar on the shore,
And Jove with solemn sacrifice adore,
A boding sign the priests and people see:
A snake of size immense ascends a tree,
And in the leafy summit spied a nest,
Which, o'er her callow young, a sparrow pressed.
Eight were the birds unfledged; their mother flew,
And hovered round her care, but still in view;
Till the fierce reptile first devoured the brood,
Then seized the fluttering dam, and drank her blood.
This dire ostent * the fearful people view;
Calchas alone, by Phœbus taught, foreknew
What heaven decreed; and, with a smiling glance,
Thus gratulates to Greece her happy chance.
"O Argives, we shall conquer; Troy is ours,
But long delays shall first afflict our powers;
Nine years of labour the nine birds portend,
The tenth shall in the town's destruction end.
The serpent, who his maw obscene had filled,
The branches in his curled embraces held;
But as in spires he stood, he turned to stone;
The stony snake retained the figure still his own.
Yet not for this the windbound navy weighed;
Slack were their sails, and Neptune disobeyed.

* [Dryden probably took this term (it is not in Ovid) from Chapman, which, after the reference in the Preface, was unkind.—Ed.]

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Some thought him loath the town should be destroyed,
Whose building had his hands divine employed;
Not so the seer, who knew, and known foreshowed,
The virgin Phœbe, with a virgin's blood,
Must first be reconciled; the common cause
Prevailed; and pity yielding to the laws,
Fair Iphigenia,* the devoted maid,
Was, by the weeping priests, in linen robes arrayed.
All mourn her fate, but no relief appeared;
The royal victim bound, the knife already reared;
When that offended Power, who caused their woe,
Relenting ceased her wrath, and stopped the coming blow.
A mist before the ministers she cast,
And in the virgin's room a hind she placed.
The oblation slain, and Phœbe reconciled,
The storm was hushed, and dimpled ocean smiled;
A favourable gale arose from shore,
Which to the port desired the Grecian galleys bore.
Full in the midst of this created space,
Betwixt heaven, earth, and skies, there stands a place
Confining on all three, with triple bound;
Whence all things, though remote, are viewed around,
And thither bring their undulating sound;
The palace of loud Fame; her seat of power,
Placed on the summit of a lofty tower.

* [I *hope* Dryden did not mean to scan "Iphigenïa." It is possible.—Ed.]

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A thousand winding entries, long and wide,
Receive of fresh reports a flowing tide;
A thousand crannies in the walls are made;
Nor gate nor bars exclude the busy trade.
'Tis built of brass, the better to diffuse
The spreading sounds, and multiply the news;
Where echoes in repeated echoes play:
A mart for ever full, and open night and day.
Nor silence is within, nor voice express,
But a deaf noise of sounds that never cease;
Confused, and chiding, like the hollow roar
Of tides, receding from the insulted shore;
Or like the broken thunder, heard from far,
When Jove to distance drives the rolling war.
The courts are filled with a tumultuous din
Of crowds, or issuing forth, or entering in;
A thoroughfare of news; where some devise
Things never heard; some mingle truth with lies;
The troubled air with empty sounds they beat;
Intent to hear, and eager to repeat.
Error sits brooding there; with added train
Of vain credulity, and joys as vain;
Suspicion, with sedition joined, are near;
And rumours raised, and murmurs mixed, and panic fear.
Fame sits aloft, and sees the subject ground,
And seas about, and skies above, inquiring all around.
The goddess gives the alarm; and soon is known
The Grecian fleet, descending on the town.
Fixed on defence, the Trojans are not slow
To guard their shore from an expected foe.
They meet in fight; by Hector's fatal hand
Protesilaus falls, and bites the strand;
Which with expense of blood the Grecians won,
And proved the strength unknown of Priam's son;

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And to their cost the Trojan leaders felt
The Grecian heroes, and what deaths they dealt.
From these first onsets, the Sigæan shore
Was strewed with carcases, and stained with gore.
Neptunian Cygnus troops of Greeks had slain;
Achilles in his car had scoured the plain,
And cleared the Trojan ranks; where'er he fought,
Cygnus, or Hector, through the fields he sought:
Cygnus he found; on him his force essayed;
For Hector was to the tenth year delayed.
His white-maned steeds, that bowed beneath the yoke,
He cheered to courage, with a gentle stroke;
Then urged his fiery chariot on the foe,
And rising shook his lance, in act to throw.
But first he cried, "O youth, be proud to bear
Thy death, ennobled by Pelides' spear."
The lance pursued the voice without delay;
Nor did the whizzing weapon miss the way,
But pierced his cuirass, with such fury sent,
And signed his bosom with a purple dint.
At this the seed of Neptune: "Goddess-born,
For ornament, not use, these arms are worn;
This helm, and heavy buckler, I can spare,
As only decorations of the war;
So Mars is armed, for glory, not for need.
'Tis somewhat more from Neptune to proceed,
Than from a daughter of the sea to spring;
Thy sire is mortal; mine is Ocean's king.
Secure of death, I should contemn thy dart,
Though naked, and impassible depart."
He said, and threw; the trembling weapon passed
Through nine bull-hides, each under other placed
On his broad shield, and stuck within the last.
Achilles wrenched it out; and sent again
The hostile gift; the hostile gift was vain.

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He tried a third, a tough well-chosen spear;
The inviolable body stood sincere,
Though Cygnus then did no defence provide,
But scornful offered his unshielded side.
  Not otherwise the impatient hero fared,
Than as a bull, encompassed with a guard,
Amid the circus roars; provoked from far
By sight of scarlet, and a sanguine war.
They quit their ground, his bended horns elude,
In vain pursuing, and in vain pursued.
  Before to further fight he would advance,
He stood considering, and surveyed his lance.
Doubts if he wielded not a wooden spear
Without a point; he looked, the point was there.
"This is my hand, and this my lance," he said,
By which so many thousand foes are dead.
O whither is their usual virtue fled!
I had it once; and the Lyrnessian wall,
And Tenedos, confessed it in their fall.
Thy streams, Caicus, rolled a crimson flood;
And Thebes ran red with her own natives' blood.
Twice Telephus employed this piercing steel,
To wound him first, and afterward to heal.
The vigour of this arm was never vain;
And that my wonted prowess I retain,
Witness these heaps of slaughter on the plain."
He said, and, doubtful of his former deeds,
To some new trial of his force proceeds.
He chose Menœtes from among the rest;
At him he lanced his spear, and pierced his breast;
On the hard earth the Lycian knocked his head,
And lay supine; and forth the spirit fled.
  Then thus the hero: "Neither can I blame
The hand, or javelin; both are still the same.
The same I will employ against this foe,
And wish but with the same success to throw."

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So spoke the chief, and while he spoke he threw;
The weapon with unerring fury flew,
At his left shoulder aimed; nor entrance found;
But back, as from a rock, with swift rebound
Harmless returned; a bloody mark appeared,
Which with false joy the flattered hero cheered.
Wound there was none; the blood that was in view,
The lance before from slain Menœtes drew.
Headlong he leaps from off his lofty car,
And in close fight on foot renews the war;
Raging with high disdain, repeats his blows;
Nor shield nor armour can their force oppose;
Huge cantlets of his buckler strew the ground,
And no defence in his bored arms is found.
But on his flesh no wound or blood is seen;
The sword itself is blunted on the skin.
This vain attempt the chief no longer bears;
But round his hollow temples and his ears,
His buckler beats; the son of Neptune, stunned
With these repeated buffets, quits his ground;
A sickly sweat succeeds, and shades of night;
Inverted nature swims before his sight:
The insulting victor presses on the more,
And treads the steps the vanquished trod before,
Nor rest, nor respite gives. A stone there lay
Behind his trembling foe, and stopped his way;
Achilles took the advantage which he found,
O'erturned, and pushed him backward on the ground.
His buckler held him under, while he pressed,
With both his knees above, his panting breast;
Unlaced his helm; about his chin the twist
He tied, and soon the strangled soul dismissed.
With eager haste he went to strip the dead;
The vanquished body from his arms was fled.

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His sea-god sire, to immortalise his fame,
Had turned it to the bird that bears his name.*
A truce succeeds the labours of this day,
And arms suspended with a long delay.
While Trojan walls are kept with watch and ward,
The Greeks before their trenches mount the guard.
The feast approached; when to the blue-eyed Maid,
His vows for Cygnus slain the victor paid,
And a white heifer on her altar laid.
The reeking entrails on the fire they threw,
And to the gods the grateful odour flew;
Heaven had its part in sacrifice; the rest
Was broiled and roasted for the future feast.
The chief invited guests were set around;
And, hunger first assuaged, the bowls were crowned,
Which in deep draughts their cares and labours drowned.
The mellow harp did not their ears employ,
And mute was all the warlike symphony;
Discourse, the food of souls, was their delight,
And pleasing chat prolonged the summer's night.
The subject, deeds of arms; and valour shown,
Or on the Trojan side, or on their own.
Of dangers undertaken, fame achieved,
They talked by turns, the talk by turns relieved.
What things but these could fierce Achilles tell,
Or what could fierce Achilles hear so well?
The last great act performed, of Cygnus slain,
Did most the martial audience entertain;
Wondering to find a body, free by fate
From steel, and which could even that steel rebate.

* The swan.

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Amazed, their admiration they renew;
And scarce Pelides could believe it true.
  Then Nestor thus:—"What once this age has known,
In fated Cygnus, and in him alone,
These eyes have seen in Cæneus long before,
Whose body not a thousand swords could bore.
Cæneus in courage and in strength excelled,
And still his Othrys with his fame is filled;
But what did most his martial deeds adorn,
(Though, since, he changed his sex,) a woman born."
  A novelty so strange, and full of fate,
His listening audience asked him to relate.
Achilles thus commends their common suit:—
"O father, first for prudence in repute,
Tell, with that eloquence so much thy own,
What thou hast heard, or what of Cæneus known;
What was he, whence his change of sex begun,
What trophies, joined in wars with thee, he won?
Who conquered him, and in what fatal strife
The youth, without a wound, could lose his life?"
  Neleides then:—"Though tardy age, and time,
Have shrunk my sinews, and decayed my prime;
Though much I have forgotten of my store,
Yet, not exhausted, I remember more.
Of all that arms achieved, or peace designed,
That action still is fresher in my mind
Than aught beside. If reverend age can give
To faith a sanction, in my third I live.
  "'Twas in my second century, I surveyed
Young Cænis, then a fair Thessalian maid.
Cænis the bright was born to high command;
A princess, and a native of thy land,
Divine Achilles; every tongue proclaimed
Her beauty, and her eyes all hearts inflamed.

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Peleus, thy sire, perhaps had sought her bed,
Among the rest; but he had either led *
Thy mother then, or was by promise tied;
But she to him, and all, alike her love denied.
"It was her fortune once, to take her way
Along the sandy margin of the sea;
The Power of Ocean viewed her as she passed,
And, loved as soon as seen, by force embraced.
So fame reports. Her virgin treasure seized,
And his new joys the ravisher so pleased,
That thus, transported, to the nymph he cried,
'Ask what thou wilt, no prayer shall be denied.'
This also fame relates; the haughty fair,
Who not the rape even of a god could bear,
This answer, proud, returned:—'To mighty wrongs,
A mighty recompense, of right, belongs.
Give me no more to suffer such a shame;
But change the woman for a better name;
One gift for all.'—She said, and, while she spoke,
A stern, majestic, manly tone she took.
A man she was; and, as the Godhead swore,
To Cæneus turned, who Cænis was before.
"To this the lover adds, without request,
No force of steel should violate his breast.
Glad of the gift, the new-made warrior goes,
And arms among the Greeks, and longs for equal foes.
"Now brave Pirithous, bold Ixion's son,
The love of fair Hippodame had won.
The cloud-begotten race, † half men, half beast,
Invited, came to grace the nuptial feast.

* ["Led" = "married," in the sense of the Latin *ducere*. —Ed.]

† The Centaurs, a people of Thessaly, said to be begotten by Ixion, on the cloud which he took for Juno.

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In a cool cave's recess the treat was made,
Whose entrance trees with spreading boughs o'ershade.
They sat: and, summoned by the bridegroom, came,
To mix with those, the Lapithæan name:
Nor wanted I; the roofs with joy resound;
And 'Hymen, Iö Hymen,' rung around.
Raised altars shone with holy fires; the bride,
Lovely herself (and lovely by her side
A bevy of bright nymphs, with sober grace,)
Came glittering like a star, and took her place;
Her heavenly form beheld, all wished her joy,
And little wanted, but in vain their wishes all employ.*
"For one, most brutal of the brutal blood,
Or whether wine or beauty fired his blood,
Or both at once, beheld with lustful eyes
The bride; at once resolved to make his prize.
Down went the board, and, fastening on her hair,
He seized with sudden force the frighted fair.
'Twas Eurytus began; his bestial kind
His crime pursued; and each as pleased his mind,
Or her, whom chance presented, took; the feast
An image of a taken town expressed.
"The cave resounds with female shrieks: we rise,
Mad with revenge, to make a swift reprise:
And Theseus first:—'What frenzy has possessed,
O Eurytus,' he cried, 'thy brutal breast,

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* ——— *Felicem diximus illa*
Conjuge Pirithoum: quod pœne fefellimus omen.

The translation is somewhat obscure; it means, "All wished her joy, and it had nearly happened that all had wished it in vain."

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To wrong Pirithous, and not him alone,
But, while I live, two friends conjoined in one?'
"To justify his threat, he thrusts aside
The crowd of Centaurs, and redeems the bride.
The monster nought replied; for words were vain,
And deeds could only deeds unjust maintain;
But answers with his hand, and forward pressed,
With blows redoubled, on his face and breast.
An ample goblet stood, of antique mould,
And rough with figures of the rising gold;
The hero snatched it up, and tossed in air
Full at the front of the foul ravisher:
He falls, and falling vomits forth a flood
Of wine, and foam, and brains, and mingled blood.
Half roaring, and half neighing through the hall,
'Arms, arms!' the double-formed with fury call,
To wreak their brother's death. A medley flight
Of bowls and jars, at first, supply the fight,
Once instruments of feasts, but now of fate;
Wine animates their rage, and arms their hate.
"Bold Amycus from the robbed vestry brings
The chalices of heaven, and holy things
Of precious weight; a sconce, that hung on high,
With tapers filled, to light the sacristy,
Torn from the cord, with his unhallowed hand
He threw amid the Lapithæan band.
On Celadon the ruin fell, and left
His face of feature and of form bereft;
So, when some brawny sacrificer knocks,
Before an altar led, an offered ox,
His eyeballs, rooted out, are thrown to ground,
His nose dismantled in his mouth is found,
His jaws, cheeks, front, one undistinguished wound.

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"This, Belates, the avenger, could not brook;
But, by the foot, a maple-board he took,
And hurled at Amycus; his chin is bent
Against his chest, and down the Centaur sent,
Whom, sputtering bloody teeth, the second blow
Of his drawn sword dispatched to shades below.
"Grineus was near; and cast a furious look
On the side-altar, censed with sacred smoke,
And bright with flaming fires; 'The gods,' he cried,
'Have with their holy trade * our hands supplied:
Why use we not their gifts?'—Then from the floor
An altar-stone he heaved, with all the load it bore;
Altar and altar's freight together flew,
Where thickest thronged the Lapithæan crew,
And, Broteas and at once Oryus slew.
Oryus' mother, Mycale, was known
Down from her sphere to draw the labouring moon.
"Exadius cried: 'Unpunished shall not go
This fact, if arms are found against the foe.'
He looked about, where on a pine were spread
The votive horns of a stag's branching head:
At Grineus these he throws; so just they fly,
That the sharp antlers stuck in either eye.
Breathless and blind he fell; with blood besmeared,
His eyeballs beaten out hung dangling on his beard.
Fierce Rhætus from the hearth a burning brand
Selects, and whirling waves, till from his hand
The fire took flame; then dashed it from the right,
On fair Charaxus' temples, near the sight:

* [In the sense of "ware."—Ed.]

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The whistling pest came on, and pierced the bone,
And caught the yellow hair, that shrivelled while it shone;
Caught, like dry stubble fired, or like seerwood;
Yet from the wound ensued no purple flood,
But looked a bubbling mass of frying blood.
His blazing locks sent forth a crackling sound,
And hissed, like red-hot iron within the smithy drowned.
The wounded warrior shook his flaming hair,
Then (what a team of horse could hardly rear,)
He heaves the threshold-stone, but could not throw;
The weight itself forbade the threatened blow;
Which, dropping from his lifted arms, came down
Full on Cometes' head, and crushed his crown.
Nor Rhætus then retained his joy; but said,
'So by their fellows may our foes be sped.'
Then with redoubled strokes he plies his head:
The burning lever not deludes his pains,
But drives the battered skull within the brains.
"Thus flushed, the conqueror, with force renewed,
Evagrus, Dryas, Corythus, pursued.
First, Corythus, with downy cheeks, he slew;
Whose fall when fierce Evagrus had in view,
He cried, 'What palm is from a beardless prey?'
Rhætus prevents what more he had to say;
And drove within his mouth the fiery death,
Which entered hissing in, and choked his breath.
At Dryas next he flew; but weary chance
No longer would the same success advance;
But, while he whirled in fiery circles round
The brand, a sharpened stake strong Dryas found,
And in the shoulder's joint inflicts the wound.

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The weapon struck; which, roaring out with pain,
He drew; nor longer durst the fight maintain,
But turned his back for fear, and fled amain.
With him fled Orneus, with like dread possessed;
Thaumas and Medon, wounded in the breast,
And Mermeros, in the late race renowned,
Now limping ran, and tardy with his wound.
Pholus and Melaneus from fight withdrew,
And Abas maimed, who boars encountering slew;
And augur Astylos, whose art in vain
From fight dissuaded the four-footed train,
Now beat the hoof with Nessus on the plain;
But to his fellow cried, 'Be safely slow;
Thy death deferred is due to great Alcides' bow.'
"Meantime, strong Dryas urged his chance so well,
That Lycidas, Areos, Imbreus fell;
All, one by one, and fighting face to face:
Crenæus fled, to fall with more disgrace;
For, fearful while he looked behind, he bore,
Betwixt his nose and front, the blow before.
Amid the noise and tumult of the fray,
Snoring and drunk with wine, Aphidas lay.
Even then the bowl within his hand he kept,
And on a bear's rough hide securely slept.
Him Phorbas with his flying dart transfixed;
'Take thy next draught with Stygian waters mixed,
And sleep thy fill,' the insulting victor cried;
Surprised with death unfelt, the Centaur died:
The ruddy vomit, as he breathed his soul,
Repassed his throat, and filled his empty bowl.
"I saw Petræus' arms employed around
A well-grown oak, to root it from the ground.

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This way, and that, he wrenched the fibrous bands;
The trunk was like a sapling in his hands,
And still obeyed the bent: while thus he stood,
Pirithous' dart drove on, and nailed him to the wood.
Lycus and Chromys fell, by him oppressed:
Helops and Dictys added to the rest
A nobler palm: Helops, through either ear
Transfixed, received the penetrating spear.
This Dictys saw; and, seized with sudden fright,
Leapt headlong from the hill of steepy height,
And crushed an ash beneath, that could not bear his weight.
The shattered tree receives his fall, and strikes,
Within his full-blown paunch, the sharpened spikes.
Strong Aphareus had heaved a mighty stone,
The fragment of a rock, and would have thrown;
But Theseus, with a club of hardened oak,
The cubit-bone of the bold Centaur broke,
And left him maimed, nor seconded the stroke;
Then leapt on tall Bianor's back; (who bore
No mortal burden but his own, before,)
Pressed with his knees his sides; the double man,
His speed with spurs increased, unwilling ran.
One hand the hero fastened on his locks;
His other plied him with repeated strokes.
The club hung round his ears, and battered brows;
He falls; and, lashing up his heels, his rider throws.
"The same Herculean arms Nedymnus wound,
And lay by him Lycotas on the ground;
And Hippasus, whose beard his breast invades;
And Ripheus, haunter of the woodland shades;

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And Tereus, used with mountain-bears to strive;
And from their dens to draw the indignant beasts alive.
"Demoleon could not bear this hateful sight,
Or the long fortune of the Athenian knight;
But pulled with all his force, to disengage
From earth a pine, the product of an age.
The root stuck fast: the broken trunk he sent
At Theseus: Theseus frustrates his intent,
And leaps aside, by Pallas warned, the blow
To shun: (for so he said; and we believed it so.)
Yet not in vain the enormous weight was cast,
Which Crantor's body sundered at the waist:
Thy father's squire, Achilles, and his care;
Whom, conquered in the Dolopeian war,
Their king, his present ruin to prevent,
A pledge of peace implored, to Peleus sent.
Thy sire, with grieving eyes, beheld his fate;
And cried, 'Not long, loved Crantor, shalt thou wait
Thy vowed revenge.' At once he said, and threw
His ashen-spear, which quivered as it flew,
With all his force and all his soul applied;
The sharp point entered in the Centaur's side:
Both hands, to wrench it out, the monster joined,
And wrenched it out, but left the steel behind.
Stuck in his lungs it stood; enraged he rears
His hoofs, and down to ground thy father bears.
Thus trampled under foot, his shield defends
His head; his other hand the lance protends.
Even while he lay extended on the dust,
He sped the Centaur, with one single thrust.
Two more his lance before transfixed from far,
And two his sword had slain in closer war.
To these was added Dorylas; who spread
A bull's two goring horns around his head.

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With these he pushed; in blood already dyed,
Him, fearless, I approached, and thus defied:
'Now, monster, now, by proof it shall appear,
Whether thy horns are sharper, or my spear.'
At this, I threw; for want of other ward,
He lifted up his hand, his front to guard.
His hand it passed, and fixed it to his brow.
Loud shouts of ours attend the lucky blow:
Him Peleus finished, with a second wound,
Which through the navel pierced; he reeled around,
And dragged his dangling bowels on the ground;
Trod what he dragged, and what he trod he crushed;
And to his mother earth, with empty belly, rushed.
"Nor could thy form, O Cyllarus, foreshow
Thy fate, if form to monsters men allow:
Just bloomed thy beard, thy beard of golden hue;
Thy locks, in golden waves, about thy shoulders flew.
Sprightly thy look; thy shapes in every part
So clean, as might instruct the sculptor's art,
As far as man extended; where began
The beast, the beast was equal to the man.
Add but a horse's head and neck, and he,
O Castor, was a courser worthy thee.
So was his back proportioned for the seat;
So rose his brawny chest; so swiftly moved his feet.
Coal-black his colour, but like jet it shone;
His legs and flowing tail were white alone.
Beloved by many maidens of his kind,
But fair Hylonome possessed his mind;
Hylonome, for features, and for face,
Excelling all the nymphs of double race.

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Nor less her blandishments, than beauty, move;
At once both loving, and confessing love.
For him she dressed; for him with female care
She combed, and set in curls, her auburn hair.
Of roses, violets, and lilies mixed,
And sprigs of flowing rosemary betwixt,
She formed the chaplet, that adorned her front;
In waters of the Pegasæan fount,
And in the streams that from the fountain play,
She washed her face, and bathed her twice a day.
The scarf of furs, that hung below her side,
Was ermine, or the panther's spotted pride;
Spoils of no common beast. With equal flame
They loved; their sylvan pleasures were the same:
All day they hunted; and when day expired,
Together to some shady cave retired.
Invited, to the nuptials both repair;
And, side by side, they both engage in war.
" Uncertain from what hand, a flying dart
At Cyllarus was sent, which pierced his heart.
The javelin drawn from out the mortal wound,
He faints with staggering steps, and seeks the ground:
The fair within her arms received his fall,
And strove his wandering spirits to recall;
And while her hand the streaming blood opposed,
Joined face to face, his lips with hers she closed.
Stifled with kisses, a sweet death he dies;
She fills the fields with undistinguished cries;
At least her words were in her clamour drowned;
For my stunned ears received no vocal sound.
In madness of her grief, she seized the dart
New-drawn, and reeking from her lover's heart;

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To her bare bosom the sharp point applied,
And wounded fell; and, falling by his side,
Embraced him in her arms, and thus embracing died.
"Even still, methinks, I see Phæocomes;
Strange was his habit, and as odd his dress.*
Six lions' hides, with thongs together fast,
His upper part defended to his waist;
And where man ended, the continued vest,
Spread on his back, the houss and trappings of a beast.
A stump too heavy for a team to draw,
(It seems a fable, though the fact I saw,)
He threw at Pholon; the descending blow
Divides the skull, and cleaves his head in two.
The brains, from nose and mouth, and either ear,
Came issuing out, as through a colander
The curdled milk; or from the press the whey,
Driven down by weights above, is drained away.
"But him, while stooping down to spoil the slain,
Pierced through the paunch, I tumbled on the plain.
Then Chthonius and Teleboas I slew;
A fork the former armed; a dart his fellow threw:
The javelin wounded me; behold the scar.
Then was my time to seek the Trojan war;
Then I was Hector's match in open field;
But he was then unborn, at least a child;
Now, I am nothing. I forbear to tell
By Periphantes how Pyretus fell,
The Centaur by the Knight; nor will I stay
On Amphix, or what deaths he dealt that day;

* The *dress* seems to apply to the clothing of the Centaur's human part, the *habit* to the furniture of the horse; perhaps, however, *habit* means his mode of life.

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What honour, with a pointless lance, he won,
Stuck in the front of a four-footed man;
What fame young Macareus obtained in fight,
Or dwell on Nessus, now returned from flight;
How prophet Mopsus not alone divined,
Whose valour equalled his foreseeing mind.
"Already Cæneus, with his conquering hand,
Had slaughtered five, the boldest of their band;
Pyrachmus, Helymus, Antimachus,
Bromus the brave, and stronger Stiphelus;
Their names I numbered, and remember well,
No trace remaining, by what wounds they fell.
"Latreus, the bulkiest of the double race,
Whom the spoiled arms of slain Halesus grace,
In years retaining still his youthful might,
Though his black hairs were interspersed with white,
Betwixt the embattled ranks began to prance,
Proud of his helm, and Macedonian lance;
And rode the ring around, that either host
Might hear him, while he made this empty boast:
'And from a strumpet shall we suffer shame?
For Cænis still, not Cæneus, is thy name;
And still the native softness of thy kind
Prevails, and leaves the woman in thy mind.
Remember what thou wert; what price was paid
To change thy sex, to make thee not a maid;
And but a man in show; go card and spin,
And leave the business of the war to men.'
"While thus the boaster exercised his pride,
The fatal spear of Cæneus reached his side;
Just in the mixture of the kinds it ran,
Betwixt the nether breast* and upper man.
The monster, mad with rage, and stung with smart,
His lance directed at the hero's heart:

* [So in folio, though "beast" is an obvious emendation. —Ed.]

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It strook; but bounded from his hardened breast,
Like hail from tiles, which the safe house invest;
Nor seemed the stroke with more effect to come,
Than a small pebble falling on a drum.
He next his falchion tried, in closer fight;
But the keen falchion had no power to bite.
He thrust; the blunted point returned again:—
'Since downright blows,' he cried, 'and thrusts are vain,
I 'll prove his side;'—in strong embraces held,
He proved his side; his side the sword repelled;
His hollow belly echoed to the stroke:
Untouched his body, as a solid rock;
Aimed at his neck at last, the blade in shivers broke.
"The impassive knight stood idle, to deride
His rage, and offered oft his naked side;
At length, 'Now, monster, in thy turn,' he cried,
'Try thou the strength of Cæneus:'—at the word
He thrust; and in his shoulder plunged the sword.
Then writhed his hand; and, as he drove it down
Deep in his breast, made many wounds in one.
"The Centaurs saw, enraged, the unhoped * success,
And, rushing on in crowds, together press.
At him, and him alone, their darts they threw;
Repulsed they from his fated body flew.
Amazed they stood; till Monychus began,—
'O shame, a nation conquered by a man!
A woman-man; yet more a man is he,
Than all our race; and what he was, are we.
Now, what avail our nerves? the united force
Of two the strongest creatures, man and horse?

* "Unhoped" for "unexpected." See note on "death unhoped," in the fable of the Cock and the Fox, vol. xi. p. 349.

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Nor goddess-born, nor of Ixion's seed
We seem, (a lover built for Juno's bed,)
Mastered by this half man. Whole mountains throw
With woods at once, and bury him below.
This only way remains. Nor need we doubt
To choke the soul within, though not to force it out.
Heap weights, instead of wounds:'—he chanced to see
Where southern storms had rooted up a tree;
This, raised from earth, against the foe he threw;
The example shown, his fellow brutes pursue.
With forest-loads the warrior they invade;
Othrys and Pelion soon were void of shade,
And spreading groves were naked mountains made.
Pressed with the burden, Cæneus pants for breath,
And on his shoulders bears the wooden death.
To heave the intolerable weight he tries;
At length it rose above his mouth and eyes.
Yet still he heaves; and, struggling with despair,
Shakes all aside, and gains a gulp of air;
A short relief, which but prolongs his pain:
He faints by fits, and then respires again.
At last, the burden only nods above,
As when an earthquake stirs the Idæan grove.
Doubtful his death; he suffocated seemed
To most; but otherwise our Mopsus deemed,
Who said he saw a yellow bird arise
From out the pile, and cleave the liquid skies.
I saw it too, with golden feathers bright,
Nor e'er before beheld so strange a sight;
Whom Mopsus viewing, as it soared around
Our troop, and heard the pinions' rattling sound,

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'All hail,' he cried, 'thy country's grace and love;
Once first of men below, now first of birds above!'—
Its author to the story gave belief;
For us, our courage was increased by grief:
Ashamed to see a single man, pursued
With odds, to sink beneath a multitude,
We pushed the foe, and forced to shameful flight:
Part fell, and part escaped by favour of the night."
This tale, by Nestor told, did much displease
Tlepolemus, the seed of Hercules;
For often he had heard his father say,
That he himself was present at the fray,
And more than shared the glories of the day.
"Old Chronicle," he said, "among the rest,
You might have named Alcides at the least;
Is he not worth your praise?"—The Pylian prince
Sighed ere he spoke, then made this proud defence:—
"My former woes, in long oblivion drowned,
I would have lost, but you renew the wound;
Better to pass him o'er, than to relate
The cause I have your mighty sire to hate.
His fame has filled the world, and reached the sky;
Which, oh, I wish with truth I could deny!
We praise not Hector, though his name we know
Is great in arms; 'tis hard to praise a foe.
He, your great father, levelled to the ground
Messenia's tower; nor better fortune found
Elis, and Pylas; that, a neighbouring state,
And this, my own; both guiltless of their fate.
To pass the rest, twelve, wanting one, he slew,
My brethren, who their birth from Neleus drew;
All youths of early promise, had they lived;
By him they perished; I alone survived.
The rest were easy conquest; but the fate
Of Periclymenos is wondrous to relate.

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To him our common grandsire of the main
Had given to change his form, and, changed, resume again.
Varied at pleasure, every shape he tried,
And in all beasts Alcides still defied;
Vanquished on earth, at length he soared above,
Changed to the bird, that bears the bolt of Jove.
The new dissembled eagle, now endued
With beak and pounces, Hercules pursued,
And cuffed his manly cheeks, and tore his face,
Then, safe retired, and towered in empty space.
Alcides bore not long his flying foe,
But, bending his inevitable bow,
Reached him in air, suspended as he stood,
And in his pinion fixed the feathered wood.
Light was the wound; but in the sinew hung
The point, and his disabled wing unstrung.
He wheeled in air, and stretched his vans in vain;
His vans no longer could his flight sustain;
For, while one gathered wind, one unsupplied
Hung drooping down, nor poised his other side.
He fell; the shaft, that slightly was impressed,
Now from his heavy fall with weight increased,
Drove through his neck aslant; he spurns the ground,
And the soul issues through the weazand's wound.
"Now, brave commander of the Rhodian seas,
What praise is due from me to Hercules?
Silence is all the vengeance I decree
For my slain brothers; but 'tis peace with thee."
Thus with a flowing tongue old Nestor spoke;
Then, to full bowls each other they provoke;
At length, with weariness and wine oppressed,
They rise from table, and withdraw to rest.
The sire of Cygnus, monarch of the main,
Meantime laments his son in battle slain;
And vows the victor's death, nor vows in vain.

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For nine long years the smothered pain he bore;
Achilles was not ripe for fate before;
Then when he saw the promised hour was near,
He thus bespoke the god, that guides the year:—
"Immortal offspring of my brother Jove,
My brightest nephew, and whom best I love,
Whose hands were joined with mine, to raise the wall
Of tottering Troy, now nodding to her fall;
Dost thou not mourn our power employed in vain,
And the defenders of our city slain?
To pass the rest, could noble Hector lie
Unpitied, dragged around his native Troy?
And yet the murderer lives; himself by far
A greater plague, than all the wasteful war:
He lives; the proud Pelides lives, to boast
Our town destroyed, our common labour lost.
O could I meet him! But I wish too late,
To prove my trident is not in his fate.
But let him try (for that 's allowed) thy dart,
And pierce his only penetrable part."
Apollo bows to the superior throne,
And to his uncle's anger adds his own;
Then, in a cloud involved, he takes his flight,
Where Greeks and Trojans mixed in mortal fight;
And found out Paris, lurking where he stood,
And stained his arrows with plebeian blood.
Phœbus to him alone the god confessed,
Then to the recreant knight he thus addressed:—
"Dost thou not blush, to spend thy shafts in vain
On a degenerate and ignoble train?
If fame, or better vengeance, be thy care,
There aim, and with one arrow end the war."

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He said; and showed from far the blazing shield
And sword, which but Achilles none could wield;
And how he moved a god, and mowed the standing field.
The deity himself directs aright
The envenomed shaft, and wings the fatal flight.
Thus fell the foremost of the Grecian name,
And he, the base adulterer, boasts the fame;
A spectacle to glad the Trojan train,
And please old Priam, after Hector slain.
If by a female hand he had foreseen
He was to die, his wish had rather been
The lance and double axe of the fair warrior queen.
And now, the terror of the Trojan field,
The Grecian honour, ornament, and shield,
High on a pile, the unconquered chief is placed;
The god,* that armed him first, consumed at last.
Of all the mighty man, the small remains
A little urn, and scarcely filled, contains;
Yet, great in Homer, still Achilles lives,
And, equal to himself, himself survives.
His buckler owns its former lord, and brings
New cause of strife betwixt contending kings;
Who worthiest, after him, his sword to wield,
Or wear his armour, or sustain his shield.
Even Diomede sat mute, with downcast eyes,
Conscious of wanted worth to win the prize;
Nor Menelaus presumed these arms to claim,
Nor he the king of men, a greater name.

* Vulcan, the god of fire.

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Two rivals only rose; Laertes' son,
And the vast bulk of Ajax Telamon.
The king, who cherished each with equal love,
And from himself all envy would remove,
Left both to be determined by the laws,
And to the Grecian chiefs transferred the cause.

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THE

SPEECHES

OF

AJAX AND ULYSSES,

FROM THE THIRTEENTH BOOK OF

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

THE chiefs were set, the soldiers crowned the field;
To these the master of the sevenfold shield
Upstarted fierce; and, kindled with disdain,
Eager to speak, unable to contain
His boiling rage, he rolled his eyes around
The shore, and Grecian galleys hauled aground.
Then stretching out his hands, "O Jove," he cried,
"Must then our cause before the fleet be tried?
And dares Ulysses for the prize contend,
In sight of what he durst not once defend
But basely fled, that memorable day,
When I from Hector's hands redeemed the flaming prey?
So much 'tis safer at the noisy bar
With words to flourish, than engage in war.

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By different methods we maintain our right,
Nor am I made to talk, nor he to fight.
In bloody fields I labour to be great;
His arms are a smooth tongue, and soft deceit.
Nor need I speak my deeds, for those you see;
The sun and day are witnesses for me.
Let him, who fights unseen, relate his own,
And vouch the silent stars, and conscious moon.
Great is the prize demanded, I confess,
But such an abject rival makes it less.
That gift, those honours, he but hoped to gain,
Can leave no room for Ajax to be vain;
Losing he wins, because his name will be
Ennobled by defeat, who durst contend with me.
Were mine own valour questioned, yet my blood
Without that plea would make my title good;
My sire was Telamon, whose arms, employed
With Hercules, these Trojan walls destroyed;
And who before, with Jason, sent from Greece,
In the first ship brought home the golden fleece:
Great Telamon from Æacus derives
His birth: (the inquisitor of guilty lives
In shades below; where Sisyphus, whose son
This thief is thought, rolls up the restless heavy stone.)
Just Æacus the king of gods above
Begot; thus Ajax is the third from Jove.
Nor should I seek advantage from my line,
Unless, Achilles, it were mixed with thine:
As next of kin Achilles' arms I claim;
This fellow would ingraft a foreign name
Upon our stock, and the Sisyphian seed
By fraud and theft asserts his father's breed.
Then must I lose these arms, because I came
To fight uncalled, a voluntary name?
Nor shunned the cause, but offered you my aid,
While he, long lurking, was to war betrayed:

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Forced to the field he came, but in the rear,
And feigned distraction, to conceal his fear;
Till one more cunning caught him in the snare,
Ill for himself, and dragged him into war.
Now let a hero's arms a coward vest,
And he, who shunned all honours, gain the best;
And let me stand excluded from my right,
Robbed of my kinsman's arms, who first appeared in fight.
Better for us at home he had remained,
Had it been true the madness which he feigned,
Or so believed; the less had been our shame,
The less his counselled crime, which brands the Grecian name;
Nor Philoctetes had been left inclosed
In a bare isle, to wants and pains exposed;
Where to the rocks, with solitary groans,
His sufferings and our baseness he bemoans,
And wishes (so may heaven his wish fulfil!)
The due reward to him who caused his ill.
Now he, with us to Troy's destruction sworn,
Our brother of the war, by whom are borne
Alcides' arrows, pent in narrow bounds,
With cold and hunger pinched, and pained with wounds,
To find him food and clothing, must employ
Against the birds the shafts due to the fate of Troy:
Yet still he lives, and lives from treason free,
Because he left Ulysses' company;
Poor Palamede might wish, so void of aid,
Rather to have been left, than so to death betrayed.
The coward bore the man immortal spite,
Who shamed him out of madness into fight;
Nor daring otherwise to vent his hate,
Accused him first of treason to the State;

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And then, for proof, produced the golden store
Himself had hidden in his tent before.
Thus of two champions he deprived our host,
By exile one, and one by treason lost.
Thus fights Ulysses, thus his fame extends,
A formidable man, but to his friends;
Great, for what greatness is in words and sound;
Even faithful Nestor less in both is found;
But, that he might without a rival reign,
He left this faithful Nestor on the plain;
Forsook his friend even at his utmost need,
Who, tired, and tardy with his wounded steed,
Cried out for aid, and called him by his name;
But cowardice has neither ears nor shame.
Thus fled the good old man, bereft of aid,
And, for as much as lay in him, betrayed.
That this is not a fable forged by me,
Like one of his, an Ulyssean lie,
I vouch even Diomede, who, though his friend,
Cannot that act excuse, much less defend:
He called him back aloud, and taxed his fear;
And sure enough he heard, but durst not hear.
"The gods with equal eyes on mortals look;
He justly was forsaken, who forsook;
Wanted that succour he refused to lend,
Found every fellow such another friend.
No wonder if he roared, that all might hear
His elocution was increased by fear;
I heard, I ran, I found him out of breath,
Pale, trembling, and half-dead with fear of death.
Though he had judged himself by his own laws,
And stood condemned, I helped the common cause:
With my broad buckler hid him from the foe,
(Even the shield trembled as he lay below,)
And from impending fate the coward freed;
Good heaven forgive me for so bad a deed!

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If still he will persist, and urge the strife,
First let him give me back his forfeit life;
Let him return to that opprobrious field,
Again creep under my protecting shield;
Let him lie wounded, let the foe be near,
And let his quivering heart confess his fear;
There put him in the very jaws of fate,
And let him plead his cause in that estate;
And yet, when snatched from death, when from below
My lifted shield I loosed, and let him go,
Good heavens, how light he rose! with what a bound
He sprung from earth, forgetful of his wound!
How fresh, how eager then his feet to ply!
Who had not strength to stand, had speed to fly!
"Hector came on, and brought the gods along;
Fear seized alike the feeble and the strong;
Each Greek was an Ulysses; such a dread
The approach, and even the sound, of Hector bred;
Him, fleshed with slaughter, and with conquest crowned,
I met, and overturned him to the ground.
When after, matchless as he deemed in might,
He challenged all our host to single fight,
All eyes were fixed on me; the lots were thrown,
But for your champion I was wished alone.
Your vows were heard; we fought, and neither yield;*
Yet I returned unvanquished from the field.
With Jove to friend, the insulting Trojan came,
And menaced us with force, our fleet with flame;

* [There is a choice here between "yield" for "yielded" or "neither" with the plural; both very irregular.—Ed.]

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Was it the strength of this tongue-valiant lord,
In that black hour, that saved you from the sword?
Or was my breast exposed alone, to brave
A thousand swords, a thousand ships to save,
The hopes of your return? and can you yield,
For a saved fleet, less than a single shield?
Think it no boast, O Grecians, if I deem
These arms want Ajax, more than Ajax them:
Or, I with them an equal honour share;
They, honoured to be worn, and I, to wear.
Will he compare my courage with his slight?
As well he may compare the day with night.
Night is indeed the province of his reign;
Yet all his dark exploits no more contain
Than a spy taken, and a sleeper slain;
A priest made prisoner, Pallas made a prey;
But none of all these actions done by day;
Nor aught of these was done, and Diomede away.
If on such petty merits you confer
So vast a prize, let each his portion share;
Make a just dividend; and, if not all,
The greater part to Diomede will fall.
But why for Ithacus such arms as those,
Who naked, and by night, invades his foes?
The glittering helm by moonlight will proclaim
The latent robber, and prevent his game;
Nor could he hold his tottering head upright
Beneath that motion, or sustain the weight;
Nor that right arm could toss the beamy lance,
Much less the left that ampler shield advance;
Ponderous with precious weight, and rough with cost
Of the round world in rising gold embossed.
That orb would ill become his hand to wield,
And look, as for the gold he stole the shield;
Which should your error on the wretch bestow,
It would not frighten, but allure the foe.

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Why asks he what avails him not in fight,
And would but cumber and retard his flight,
In which his only excellence is placed?
You give him death, that intercept his haste.
Add, that his own is yet a maiden-shield,
Nor the least dint has suffered in the field,
Guiltless of fight; mine, battered, hewed, and bored,
Worn out of service, must forsake his lord.
What further need of words our right to scan?
My arguments are deeds, let action speak the man.
Since from a champion's arms the strife arose,
So cast the glorious prize amid the foes;
Then send us to redeem both arms and shield,
And let him wear, who wins them in the field."
He said:—A murmur from the multitude,
Or somewhat like a stifled shout, ensued;
Till from his seat arose Laertes' son,
Looked down a while, and paused ere he begun;
Then to the expecting audience raised his look,
And not without prepared attention spoke;
Soft was his tone, and sober was his face,
Action his words, and words his action grace.
"If heaven, my lords, had heard our common prayer,
These arms had caused no quarrel for an heir;
Still great Achilles had his own possessed,
And we with great Achilles had been blessed:
But since hard fate, and heaven's severe decree,
Have ravished him away from you and me,
(At this he sighed, and wiped his eyes, and drew,
Or seemed to draw, some drops of kindly dew,)
Who better can succeed Achilles lost,
Than he who gave Achilles to your host?

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This only I request, that neither he
May gain, by being what he seems to be,
A stupid thing, nor I may lose the prize,
By having sense, which heaven to him denies;
Since, great or small, the talent I enjoyed
Was ever in the common cause employed:
Nor let my wit, and wonted eloquence,
Which often has been used in your defence
And in my own, this only time be brought
To bear against myself, and deemed a fault.
Make not a crime, where nature made it none;
For every man may freely use his own.
The deeds of long descended ancestors
Are but by grace of imputation ours,
Theirs in effect; but since he draws his line
From Jove, and seems to plead a right divine,
From Jove, like him, I claim my pedigree,
And am descended in the same degree.
My sire, Laertes, was Arcesius' heir,
Arcesius was the son of Jupiter;
No parricide, no banished man, is known
In all my line; let him excuse his own.
Hermes ennobles too my mother's side,
By both my parents to the gods allied.
But not because that on the female part
My blood is better, dare I claim desert,
Or that my sire from parricide is free;
But judge by merit betwixt him and me.
The prize be to the best; provided yet,
That Ajax for a while his kin forget,
And his great sire, and greater uncle's name,
To fortify by them his feeble claim.
Be kindred and relation laid aside,
And honour's cause by laws of honour tried;
For, if he plead proximity of blood,
That empty title is with ease withstood.

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Peleus, the hero's sire, more nigh than he,
And Pyrrhus, his undoubted progeny,
Inherit first these trophies of the field;
To Scyros, or to Phthia, send the shield:
And Teucer has an uncle's right, yet he
Waves his pretensions, nor contends with me.
"Then, since the cause on pure desert is placed,
Whence shall I take my rise, what reckon last?
I not presume on every act to dwell,
But take these few, in order as they fell.
"Thetis, who knew the fates, applied her care
To keep Achilles in disguise from war;
And, till the threatening influence were past,
A woman's habit on the hero cast:
All eyes were cozened by the borrowed vest,
And Ajax (never wiser than the rest)
Found no Pelides there. At length I came
With proffered wares to this pretended dame;
She, not discovered by her mien or voice,
Betrayed her manhood by her manly choice;
And, while on female toys her fellows look,
Grasped in her warlike hand, a javelin shook;
Whom, by this act revealed, I thus bespoke:—
'O goddess-born! resist not heaven's decree,
The fall of Ilium is reserved for thee;'
Then seized him, and, produced in open light,
Sent blushing to the field the fatal knight.
Mine then are all his actions of the war;
Great Telephus was conquered by my spear,
And after cured; to me the Thebans owe,
Lesbos and Tenedos, their overthrow;
Scyros and Cylla; not on all to dwell,
By me Lyrnessus and strong Chrysa fell;
And, since I sent the man who Hector slew,
To me the noble Hector's death is due.
Those arms I put into his living hand;
Those arms, Pelides dead, I now demand.

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"When Greece was injured in the Spartan prince,
And met at Aulis to revenge the offence,
'Twas a dead calm, or adverse blasts, that reigned,
And in the port the windbound fleet detained:
Bad signs were seen, and oracles severe
Were daily thundered in our general's ear,
That by his daughter's blood we must appease
Diana's kindled wrath, and free the seas.
Affection, interest, fame, his heart assailed,
But soon the father o'er the king prevailed;
Bold, on himself he took the pious crime,
As angry with the gods as they with him.
No subject could sustain their sovereign's look,
Till this hard enterprise I undertook;
I only durst the imperial power control,
And undermined the parent in his soul;
Forced him to exert the king for common good,
And pay our ransom with his daughter's blood.
Never was cause more difficult to plead,
Than where the judge against himself decreed;
Yet this I won by dint of argument.
The wrongs his injured brother underwent,
And his own office, shamed him to consent.
"'Twas harder yet to move the mother's mind,
And to this heavy task was I designed:
Reasons against her love I knew were vain;
I circumvented whom I could not gain.
Had Ajax been employed, our slackened sails
Had still at Aulis waited happy gales.
"Arrived at Troy, your choice was fixed on me,
A fearless envoy, fit for a bold embassy.
Secure, I entered through the hostile court,
Glittering with steel, and crowded with resort:
There, in the midst of arms, I plead our cause,
Urge the foul rape, and violated laws;

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Accuse the foes as authors of the strife,
Reproach the ravisher, demand the wife.
Priam, Antenor, and the wiser few,
I moved; but Paris and his lawless crew
Scarce held their hands, and lifted swords; but stood
In act to quench their impious thirst of blood.
This Menelaus knows; exposed to share
With me the rough preludium of the war.
"Endless it were to tell what I have done,
In arms, or counsel, since the siege begun.
The first encounters past, the foe repelled,
They skulked within the town, we kept the field.
War seemed asleep for nine long years; at length,
Both sides resolved to push, we tried our strength.
Now what did Ajax while our arms took breath,
Versed only in the gross mechanic trade of death?
If you require my deeds, with ambushed arms
I trapped the foe, or tired with false alarms;
Secured the ships, drew lines along the plain,
The fainting cheered, chastised the rebel-train,
Provided forage, our spent arms renewed;
Employed at home, or sent abroad, the common cause pursued.
"The king, deluded in a dream by Jove,
Despaired to take the town, and ordered to remove.
What subject durst arraign the power supreme,
Producing Jove to justify his dream?
Ajax might wish the soldiers to retain
From shameful flight, but wishes were in vain;
As wanting of effect had been his words,
Such as of course his thundering tongue affords.
But did this boaster threaten, did he pray,
Or by his own example urge their stay?
None, none of these, but ran himself away.

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I saw him run, and was ashamed to see ;
Who plied his feet so fast to get aboard as he ?
Then speeding through the place, I made a stand,
And loudly cried, ' O base degenerate band,
To leave a town already in your hand !
After so long expense of blood, for fame,
To bring home nothing but perpetual shame !'—
These words, or what I have forgotten since,
For grief inspired me then with eloquence,
Reduced their minds; they leave the crowded port,
And to their late forsaken camp resort.
Dismayed the council met; this man was there,
But mute, and not recovered of his fear:
Thersites taxed the king, and loudly railed,
But his wide opening mouth with blows I sealed.
Then, rising, I excite their souls to fame,
And kindle sleeping virtue into flame.
From thence, whatever he performed in fight
Is justly mine, who drew him back from flight.
"Which of the Grecian chiefs consorts with thee ?
But Diomede desires my company,
And still communicates his praise with me.
As guided by a god, secure he goes,
Armed with my fellowship, amid the foes ;
And sure no little merit I may boast,
Whom such a man selects from such an host.
Unforced by lots, I went without affright,
To dare with him the dangers of the night ;
On the same errand sent, we met the spy
Of Hector, double-tongued, and used to lie ;
Him I dispatched, but not till, undermined,
I drew him first to tell what treacherous Troy designed.
My task performed, with praise I had retired,
But, not content with this, to greater praise aspired ;

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Invaded Rhœsus, and his Thracian crew,
And him, and his, in their own strength, I slew:
Returned a victor, all my vows complete,
With the king's chariot, in his royal seat.
Refuse me now his arms, whose fiery steeds
Were promised to the spy for his nocturnal deeds; *
And let dull Ajax bear away my right,
When all his days outbalance this one night.
"Nor fought I darkling still; the sun beheld
With slaughtered Lycians when I strewed the field:
You saw, and counted as I passed along,
Alaster, Cromius, Ceranos the strong,
Alcander, Prytanis, and Halius,
Noemon, Charopes, and Ennomus,
Choon, Chersidamas, and five beside,
Men of obscure descent, but courage tried;
All these this hand laid breathless on the ground.
Nor want I proofs of many a manly wound;
All honest, all before; believe not me,
Words may deceive, but credit what you see."
At this he bared his breast, and showed his scars,
As of a furrowed field, well ploughed with wars;
"Nor is this part unexercised," said he;
"That giant bulk of his from wounds is free;
Safe in his shield he fears no foe to try,
And better manages his blood than I.
But this avails me not; our boaster strove
Not with our foes alone, but partial Jove,

* Dolon demanded the horses of Achilles as his reward for exploring the Grecian camp, but was intercepted and slain by Ulysses.

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To save the fleet. This I confess is true,
Nor will I take from any man his due;
But, thus assuming all, he robs from you.
Some part of honour to your share will fall;
He did the best indeed, but did not all.
Patroclus in Achilles' arms, and thought
The chief he seemed, with equal ardour fought;
Preserved the fleet, repelled the raging fire,
And forced the fearful Trojans to retire.
"But Ajax boasts, that he was only thought
A match for Hector, who the combat sought:
Sure he forgets the king, the chiefs, and me,
All were as eager for the fight as he;
He but the ninth, and, not by public voice,
Or ours preferred, was only fortune's choice:
They fought; nor can our hero boast the event,
For Hector from the field unwounded went.
"Why am I forced to name that fatal day,
That snatched the prop and pride of Greece away?
I saw Pelides sink, with pious grief,
And ran in vain, alas! to his relief,
For the brave soul was fled; full of my friend,
I rushed amid the war, his relics to defend;
Nor ceased my toil till I redeemed the prey,
And, loaded with Achilles, marched away.
Those arms, which on these shoulders then I bore,
'Tis just you to these shoulders should restore.
You see I want not nerves, who could sustain
The ponderous ruins of so great a man;
Or if in others equal force you find,
None is endued with a more grateful mind.
"Did Thetis then, ambitious in her care,
These arms, thus laboured, for her son prepare,
That Ajax after him the heavenly gift should wear?

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For that dull soul to stare, with stupid eyes,
On the learned unintelligible prize?
What are to him the sculptures of the shield,
Heaven's planets, earth, and ocean's watery field?
The Pleiads, Hyads; Less, and Greater Bear,
Undipped in seas; Orion's angry star;
Two differing cities, graved on either hand?
Would he wear arms he cannot understand?
"Beside, what wise objections he prepares
Against my late accession to the wars!
Does not the fool perceive his argument
Is with more force against Achilles bent?
For, if dissembling be so great a crime,
The fault is common, and the same in him;
And if he taxes both of long delay,
My guilt is less, who sooner came away.
His pious mother, anxious for his life,
Detained her son; and me, my pious wife.
To them the blossoms of our youth were due;
Our riper manhood we reserved for you.
But grant me guilty, 'tis not much my care,
When with so great a man my guilt I share;
My wit to war the matchless hero brought,
But by this fool he never had been caught.
"Nor need I wonder, that on me he threw
Such foul aspersions, when he spares not you:
If Palamede unjustly fell by me,
Your honour suffered in the unjust decree.
I but accused, you doomed; and yet he died,
Convinced of treason, and was fairly tried.
You heard not he was false; your eyes beheld
The traitor manifest, the bribe revealed.
"That Philoctetes is on Lemnos left,
Wounded, forlorn, of human aid bereft,
Is not my crime, or not my crime alone;
Defend your justice, for the fact's your own.

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'Tis true, the advice was mine; that, staying there,
He might his weary limbs with rest repair,
From a long voyage free, and from a longer war.
He took the counsel, and he lives at least;
The event declares I counselled for the best;
Though faith is all in ministers of State,
For who can promise to be fortunate?
Now since his arrows are the fate of Troy,
Do not my wit, or weak address, employ;
Send Ajax there, with his persuasive sense,
To mollify the man, and draw him thence:
But Xanthus shall run backward; Ida stand
A leafless mountain; and the Grecian band
Shall fight for Troy; if, when my counsels fail,
The wit of heavy Ajax can prevail.
" Hard Philoctetes, exercise thy spleen
Against thy fellows, and the king of men;
Curse my devoted head, above the rest,
And wish in arms to meet me, breast to breast;
Yet I the dangerous task will undertake,
And either die myself, or bring thee back.
" Nor doubt the same success, as when, before,
The Phrygian prophet to these tents I bore,
Surprised by night, and forced him to declare
In what was placed the fortune of the war;
Heaven's dark decrees and answers to display,
And how to take the town, and where the secret lay.
Yet this I compassed, and from Troy conveyed
The fatal image of their guardian Maid.
That work was mine; for Pallas, though our friend,
Yet while she was in Troy, did Troy defend.
Now what has Ajax done, or what designed?
A noisy nothing, and an empty wind.

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If he be what he promises in show,
Why was I sent, and why feared he to go?
Our boasting champion thought the task not light
To pass the guards, commit himself to night;
Not only through a hostile town to pass,
But scale, with deep ascent, the sacred place;
With wandering steps to search the citadel,
And from the priests their patroness to steal;
Then through surrounding foes to force my way,
And bear in triumph home the heavenly prey;
Which had I not, Ajax in vain had held
Before that monstrous bulk his seven-fold shield,
That night to conquer Troy I might be said,
When Troy was liable to conquest made.
"Why point'st thou to my partner of the war?
Tydides had indeed a worthy share
In all my toil, and praise; but when thy might
Our ships protected, didst thou singly fight?
All joined, and thou of many wert but one;
I asked no friend, nor had, but him alone;
Who, had he not been well assured, that art
And conduct were of war the better part,
And more availed than strength, my valiant friend
Had urged a better right, than Ajax can pretend;
As good, at least, Eurypylus may claim,
And the more moderate Ajax of the name;
The Cretan king, and his brave charioteer,
And Menelaus, bold with sword and spear:
All these had been my rivals in the shield,
And yet all these to my pretensions yield.
Thy boisterous hands are then of use, when I
With this directing head those hands apply.
Brawn without brain is thine; my prudent care
Foresees, provides, administers the war:

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Thy province is to fight; but when shall be
The time to fight, the king consults with me.
No dram of judgment with thy force is joined;
Thy body is of profit, and my mind.
But, how much more the ship her safety owes
To him who steers, than him that only rows;
By how much more the captain merits praise
Than he who fights, and, fighting, but obeys;
By so much greater is my worth than thine,
Who canst but execute what I design.
What gain'st thou, brutal man, if I confess
Thy strength superior, when thy wit is less?
Mind is the man; I claim my whole desert
From the mind's vigour, and the immortal part.
"But you, O Grecian chiefs, reward my care,
Be grateful to your watchman of the war;
For all my labours in so long a space,
Sure I may plead a title to your grace.
Enter the town; I then unbarred the gates,
When I removed their tutelary fates.
By all our common hopes, if hopes they be,
Which I have now reduced to certainty;
By falling Troy, by yonder tottering towers,
And by their taken gods, which now are ours;
Or, if there yet a further task remains,
To be performed by prudence or by pains;
If yet some desperate action rests behind,
That asks high conduct, and a dauntless mind;
If aught be wanting to the Trojan doom,
Which none but I can manage and o'ercome;
Award those arms I ask, by your decree;
Or give to this what you refuse to me."
He ceased, and, ceasing, with respect he bowed,
And with his hand at once the fatal statue showed.
Heaven, air, and ocean rung, with loud applause,
And by the general vote he gained his cause.

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Thus conduct won the prize, when courage failed,
And eloquence o'er brutal force prevailed.

The Death of Ajax.

He who could often, and alone, withstand
The foe, the fire, and Jove's own partial hand,
Now cannot his unmastered grief sustain,
But yields to rage, to madness, and disdain;
Then snatching out his falchion,—"Thou," said he,
"Art mine; Ulysses lays no claim to thee.
O often tried, and ever trusty sword,
Now do thy last kind office to thy lord!
'Tis Ajax who requests thy aid, to show
None but himself, himself could overthrow."
He said, and with so good a will to die,
Did to his breast the fatal point apply,
It found his heart, a way till then unknown,
Where never weapon entered but his own;
No hands could force it thence, so fixed it stood,
Till out it rushed, expelled by streams of spouting blood.
The fruitful blood produced a flower,* which grew
On a green stem, and of a purple hue;
Like his, whom unaware Apollo slew.
Inscribed in both, the letters are the same,
But those express the grief, and these the name.

* The Hyacinth.

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THE STORY OF

ACIS, POLYPHEMUS, AND GALATEA.

FROM THE THIRTEENTH BOOK OF

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

Acis, the lovely youth, whose loss I mourn,
From Faunus and the nymph Symethis born,
Was both his parents' pleasure; but to me
Was all that love could make a lover be.
The gods our minds in mutual bands did join;
I was his only joy, and he was mine.
Now sixteen summers the sweet youth had seen,
And doubtful down began to shade his chin;
When Polyphemus first disturbed our joy,
And loved me fiercely, as I loved the boy.
Ask not which passion in my soul was higher,
My last aversion, or my first desire;
Nor this the greater was, nor that the less,
Both were alike, for both were in excess.
Thee, Venus, thee both heaven and earth obey;
Immense thy power, and boundless is thy sway.

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The Cyclops, who defied the ethereal throne,
And thought no thunder louder than his own,
The terror of the woods, and wilder far
Than wolves in plains, or bears in forests are;
The inhuman host, who made his bloody feasts
On mangled members of his butchered guests,
Yet felt the force of love, and fierce desire,
And burnt for me, with unrelenting fire;
Forgot his caverns, and his woolly care,
Assumed the softness of a lover's air,
And combed, with teeth of rakes, his rugged hair.
Now with a crooked scythe his beard he sleeks,
And mows the stubborn stubble of his cheeks;
Now in the crystal stream he looks, to try
His simagree,* and rolls his glaring eye.
His cruelty and thirst of blood are lost;
And ships securely sail along the coast.
The prophet Telemus (arrived by chance
Where Ætna's summits to the seas advance,
Who marked the tracks of every bird that flew,
And sure presages from their flying drew,)
Foretold the Cyclops, that Ulysses' hand
In his broad eye should thrust a flaming brand.
The giant, with a scornful grin, replied,
"Vain augur, thou hast falsely prophesied:
Already Love his flaming brand has tost;
Looking on two fair eyes, my sight I lost."
Thus, warned in vain, with stalking pace he strode,
And stamped the margin of the briny flood
With heavy steps, and, weary, sought again
The cool retirement of his gloomy den.

* "Simagree," one of our author's Gallicisms, for affected contortions of the face.

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A promontory, sharpening by degrees,
Ends in a wedge, and overlooks the seas;
On either side, below, the water flows:
This airy walk the giant-lover chose;
Here on the midst he sate; his flocks, unled,
Their shepherd followed, and securely fed.
A pine so burly, and of length so vast,
That sailing ships required it for a mast,
He wielded for a staff, his steps to guide;
But laid it by, his whistle while he tried.
A hundred reeds, of a prodigious growth,
Scarce made a pipe proportioned to his mouth;
Which when he gave it wind, the rocks around,
And watery plains, the dreadful hiss resound.
I heard the ruffian shepherd rudely blow,
Where, in a hollow cave, I sat below.
On Acis' bosom I my head reclined;
And still preserve the poem in my mind.
"O lovely Galatea, whiter far
Than falling snows, and rising lilies are;
More flowery than the meads, as crystal bright,
Erect as alders, and of equal height;
More wanton than a kid; more sleek thy skin,
Than orient shells, that on the shores are seen;
Than apples fairer, when the boughs they lade;
Pleasing, as winter suns, or summer shade;
More grateful to the sight than goodly plains,
And softer to the touch than down of swans,
Or curds new turned; and sweeter to the taste,
Than swelling grapes, that to the vintage haste;
More clear than ice, or running streams, that stray
Through garden plots, but ah! more swift than they.
"Yet, Galatea, harder to be broke
Than bullocks, unreclaimed to bear the yoke,
And far more stubborn than the knotted oak;

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Like sliding streams, impossible to hold,
Like them fallacious, like their fountains cold;
More warping than the willow, to decline
My warm embrace; more brittle than the vine;
Immovable, and fixed in thy disdain;
Rough, as these rocks, and of a harder grain;
More violent than is the rising flood;
And the praised peacock is not half so proud;
Fierce as the fire, and sharp as thistles are,
And more outrageous than a mother bear;
Deaf as the billows to the vows I make,
And more revengeful than a trodden snake;
In swiftness fleeter than the flying hind,
Or driven tempests, or the driving wind.
All other faults with patience I can bear;
But swiftness is the vice I only fear.
"Yet, if you knew me well, you would not shun
My love, but to my wished embraces run;
Would languish in your turn, and court my stay,
And much repent of your unwise delay.
"My palace, in the living rock, is made
By nature's hand; a spacious pleasing shade,
Which neither heat can pierce, nor cold invade.
My garden filled with fruits you may behold,
And grapes in clusters, imitating gold;
Some blushing bunches of a purple hue;
And these, and those, are all reserved for you.
Red strawberries in shades expecting stand,
Proud to be gathered by so white a hand.
Autumnal cornels latter fruit provide,
And plums, to tempt you, turn their glossy side;
Not those of common kinds, but such alone,
As in Phæacian orchards might have grown.
Nor chestnuts shall be wanting to your food,
Nor garden-fruits, nor wildings of the wood.
The laden boughs for you alone shall bear,
And yours shall be the product of the year.

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"The flocks you see are all my own, beside
The rest that woods and winding valleys hide,
And those that folded in the caves abide.
Ask not the numbers of my growing store;
Who knows how many, knows he has no more.
Nor will I praise my cattle; trust not me,
But judge yourself, and pass your own decree.
Behold their swelling dugs; the sweepy weight
Of ewes, that sink beneath the milky freight;
In the warm folds their tender lambkins lie;
Apart from kids, that call with human cry.
New milk in nut-brown bowls is duly served
For daily drink, the rest for cheese reserved.
Nor are these household dainties all my store;
The fields and forests will afford us more;
The deer, the hare, the goat, the savage boar.
All sorts of venison, and of birds the best;
A pair of turtles taken from the nest.
I walked the mountains, and two cubs* I found,
Whose dam had left them on the naked ground;
So like, that no distinction could be seen;
So pretty, they were presents for a queen:
And so they shall; I took them both away,
And keep, to be companions of your play.
"Oh raise, fair nymph, your beauteous face above
The waves; nor scorn my presents, and my love.
Come, Galatea, come, and view my face;
I late beheld it in the watery glass,
And found it lovelier than I feared it was.
Survey my towering stature, and my size:
Not Jove, the Jove you dream, that rules the skies,

* The word "bear-cubs" is wanting, to complete the sense of Ovid—

"*Villosæ catulos ursæ.*"

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Bears such a bulk, or is so largely spread.
My locks (the plenteous harvest of my head,)
Hang o'er my manly face, and dangling down,
As with a shady grove, my shoulders crown.
Nor think, because my limbs and body bear
A thick-set underwood of bristling hair,
My shape deformed; what fouler sight can be,
Than the bald branches of a leafless tree?
Foul is the steed without a flowing main;
And birds, without their feathers, and their train:
Wool decks the sheep; and man receives a grace
From bushy limbs, and from a bearded face.
My forehead with a single eye is filled,
Round as a ball, and ample as a shield.
The glorious lamp of heaven, the radiant sun,
Is Nature 's eye; and she 's content with one.
Add, that my father sways your seas, and I,
Like you, am of the watery family.
I make you his, in making you my own;
You I adore, and kneel to you alone;
Jove, with his fabled thunder, I despise,
And only fear the lightning of your eyes.
Frown not, fair nymph! yet I could bear to be
Disdained, if others were disdained with me.
But to repulse the Cyclops, and prefer
The love of Acis,—heavens! I cannot bear.
But let the stripling please himself; nay more,
Please you, though that 's the thing I most abhor;
The boy shall find, if e'er we cope in fight,
These giant limbs endued with giant might.
His living bowels from his belly torn,
And scattered limbs, shall on the flood be borne,
Thy flood, ungrateful nymph; and fate shall find
That way for thee and Acis to be joined.
For oh! I burn with love, and thy disdain
Augments at once my passion, and my pain.

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Translated Ætna flames within my heart,
And thou, inhuman, wilt not ease my smart."
  Lamenting thus in vain, he rose, and strode
With furious paces to the neighbouring wood;
Restless his feet, distracted was his walk,
Mad were his motions, and confused his talk;
Mad as the vanquished bull, when forced to yield
His lovely mistress, and forsake the field.
  Thus far unseen I saw; when, fatal chance
His looks directing, with a sudden glance,
Acis and I were to his sight betrayed;
Where, nought suspecting, we securely played.
From his wide mouth a bellowing cry he cast,—
"I see, I see, but this shall be your last."
A roar so loud made Ætna to rebound,
And all the Cyclops laboured in the sound.
Affrighted with his monstrous voice, I fled,
And in the neighbouring ocean plunged my head.
Poor Acis turned his back, and, "Help," he cried,
"Help, Galatea! help, my parent Gods,
And take me, dying, to your deep abodes!"
The Cyclops followed; but he sent before
A rib, which from the living rock he tore;
Though but an angle reached him of the stone,
The mighty fragment was enough alone,
To crush all Acis; 'twas too late to save,
But what the fates allowed to give, I gave;
That Acis to his lineage should return,
And roll among the river Gods his urn.
Straight issued from the stone a stream of blood,
Which lost the purple, mingling with the flood;
Then like a troubled torrent it appeared;
The torrent too, in little space, was cleared;
The stone was cleft, and through the yawning chink
New reeds arose, on the new river's brink.

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The rock, from out its hollow womb, disclosed
A sound like water in its course opposed:
When (wondrous to behold!) full in the flood,
Up starts a youth, and navel-high he stood.
Horns from his temples rise; and either horn
Thick wreaths of reeds (his native growth) adorn.
Were not his stature taller than before,
His bulk augmented, and his beauty more,
His colour blue, for Acis he might pass;
And Acis, changed into a stream, he was.
But, mine no more, he rolls along the plains
With rapid motion, and his name retains.

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OF THE

PYTHAGOREAN PHILOSOPHY.

FROM THE FIFTEENTH BOOK OF

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES.

The fourteenth book concludes with the death and deification of Romulus; the fifteenth begins with the election of Numa to the crown of Rome. On this occasion, Ovid, following the opinion of some authors, makes Numa the scholar of Pythagoras, and to have begun his acquaintance with that philosopher at Crotona, a town in Italy; from thence he makes a digression to the moral and natural philosophy of Pythagoras; on both which our author enlarges; and which are the most learned and beautiful parts of the Metamorphoses.

A KING is sought to guide the growing State,
One able to support the public weight,
And fill the throne where Romulus hath sate.
Renown, which oft bespeaks the public voice,
Had recommended Numa to their choice;
A peaceful, pious prince; who, not content
To know the Sabine rites, his study bent
To cultivate his mind; to learn the laws
Of nature, and explore their hidden cause.
Urged by this care, his country he forsook,
And to Crotona thence his journey took.

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Arrived, he first inquired the founder's name
Of this new colony; and whence he came.
Then thus a senior of the place replies,
Well read, and curious of antiquities:—
"'Tis said, Alcides hither took his way
From Spain, and drove along his conquered prey;
Then, leaving in the fields his grazing cows,
He sought himself some hospitable house.
Good Croton entertained his godlike guest;
While he repaired his weary limbs with rest.
The hero, thence departing, blessed the place;
'And here,' he said, 'in time's revolving race,
A rising town shall take its name from thee.'
Revolving time fulfilled the prophecy;
For Myscelos, the justest man on earth,
Alemon's son, at Argos had his birth;
Him Hercules, armed with his club of oak,
O'ershadowed in a dream, and thus bespoke;
'Go, leave thy native soil, and make abode
Where Æsaris rolls down his rapid flood;'
He said; and sleep forsook him, and the God.
Trembling he waked, and rose with anxious heart;
His country laws forbade him to depart;
What should he do? 'Twas death to go away,
And the God menaced if he dared to stay.
All day he doubted, and, when night came on,
Sleep, and the same forewarning dream, begun;
Once more the God stood threatening o'er his head,
With added curses if he disobeyed.
Twice warned, he studied flight; but would convey,
At once, his person and his wealth away.
Thus while he lingered, his design was heard;
A speedy process formed, and death declared.

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Witness there needed none of his offence,
Against himself the wretch was evidence;
Condemned, and destitute of human aid,
To him, for whom he suffered, thus he prayed.
"'O Power, who hast deserved in heaven a throne,
Not given, but by thy labours made thy own,
Pity thy suppliant, and protect his cause,
Whom thou hast made obnoxious to the laws!'
"A custom was of old, and still remains,
Which life or death by suffrages ordains;
White stones and black within an urn are cast,
The first absolve, but fate is in the last.
The judges to the common urn bequeath
Their votes, and drop the sable signs of death:
The box receives all black; but, poured from thence,
The stones came candid forth, the hue of innocence.
Thus Alimonides his safety won,
Preserved from death by Alcumena's son.
Then to his kinsman God his vows he pays,
And cuts with prosperous gales the Ionian seas;
He leaves Tarentum, favoured by the wind,
And Thurine bays, and Temises, behind;
Soft Sybaris, and all the capes that stand
Along the shore, he makes in sight of land;
Still doubling, and still coasting, till he found
The mouth of Æsaris, and promised ground;
Then saw where, on the margin of the flood,
The tomb that held the bones of Croton stood;
Here, by the God's command, he built and walled
The place predicted, and Crotona called.
Thus fame, from time to time, delivers down
The sure tradition of the Italian town.

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"Here dwelt the man divine whom Samos bore,
But now self-banished from his native shore,
Because he hated tyrants, nor could bear
The chains which none but servile souls will wear.
He, though from heaven remote, to heaven could move,
With strength of mind, and tread the abyss above;
And penetrate, with his interior light,
Those upper depths, which Nature hid from sight;
And what he had observed, and learnt from thence,
Loved in familiar language to dispense.
"The crowd with silent admiration stand,
And heard him, as they heard their god's command;
While he discoursed of heaven's mysterious laws,
The world's original, and nature's cause;
And what was God, and why the fleecy snows
In silence fell, and rattling winds arose;
What shook the steadfast earth, and whence begun
The dance of planets round the radiant sun;
If thunder was the voice of angry Jove,
Or clouds, with nitre pregnant, burst above;
Of these, and things beyond the common reach,
He spoke, and charmed his audience with his speech.
"He first the taste of flesh from tables drove,
And argued well, if arguments could move:—
'O mortals! from your fellows' blood abstain,
Nor taint your bodies with a food profane;
While corn and pulse by nature are bestowed,
And planted orchards bend their willing load;

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While laboured gardens wholesome herbs produce,
And teeming vines afford their generous juice;
Nor tardier fruits of cruder kind are lost,
But tamed with fire, or mellowed by the frost;
While kine to pails distended udders bring,
And bees their honey, redolent of spring;
While earth not only can your needs supply,
But, lavish of her store, provides for luxury;
A guiltless feast administers with ease,
And without blood is prodigal to please.
Wild beasts their maws with their slain brethren fill,
And yet not all, for some refuse to kill;
Sheep, goats, and oxen, and the nobler steed,
On browse, and corn, the flowery meadows feed.
Bears, tigers, wolves, the lion's angry brood,
Whom heaven endued with principles of blood,
He wisely sundered from the rest, to yell
In forests, and in lonely caves to dwell,
Where stronger beasts oppress the weak by might,
And all in prey and purple feasts delight.
"'O impious use! to Nature's laws opposed,
Where bowels are in other bowels closed;
Where, fattened by their fellows' fat, they thrive;
Maintained by murder, and by death they live.
'Tis then for nought that mother earth provides
The stores of all she shows, and all she hides,
If men with fleshy morsels must be fed,
And chew with bloody teeth the breathing bread.
What else is this but to devour our guests,
And barbarously renew Cyclopean feasts!
We, by destroying life, our life sustain,
And gorge the ungodly maw with meats obscene.
"'Not so the golden age, who fed on fruit,
Nor durst with bloody meals their mouths pollute.

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Then birds in airy space might safely move,
And timorous hares on heaths securely rove;
Nor needed fish the guileful hooks to fear,
For all was peaceful, and that peace sincere.
Whoever was the wretch (and cursed be he!)
That envied first our food's simplicity,
The essay of bloody feasts on brutes began,
And, after, forged the sword to murder man.
Had he the sharpened steel alone employed
On beasts of prey, that other beasts destroyed,
Or men invaded with their fangs and paws,
This had been justified by Nature's laws,
And self-defence; but who did feasts begin
Of flesh, he stretched necessity to sin.
To kill man-killers man has lawful power,
But not the extended licence, to devour.
"'Ill habits gather by unseen degrees,
As brooks make rivers, rivers run to seas.
The sow, with her broad snout for rooting up
The intrusted seed, was judged to spoil the crop,
And intercept the sweating farmer's hope;
The covetous churl, of unforgiving kind,
The offender to the bloody priest resigned:
Her hunger was no plea; for that she died.
The goat came next in order, to be tried:
The goat had cropt the tendrils of the vine;
In vengeance laity and clergy join,
Where one had lost his profit, one his wine.
Here was, at least, some shadow of offence;
The sheep was sacrificed on no pretence,
But meek and unresisting innocence.
A patient, useful creature, born to bear
The warm and woolly fleece, that clothed her murderer,
And daily to give down the milk she bred,
A tribute for the grass on which she fed.

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Living, both food and raiment she supplies,
And is of least advantage when she dies.
"'How did the toiling ox his death deserve,
A downright simple drudge, and born to serve?
O tyrant! with what justice canst thou hope
The promise of the year, a plenteous crop,
When thou destroyest thy labouring steer, who tilled,
And ploughed, with pains, thy else ungrateful field?
From his yet reeking neck to draw the yoke,
(That neck with which the surly clods he broke,)
And to the hatchet yield thy husbandman,
Who finished autumn, and the spring began!
Nor this alone; but, heaven itself to bribe,
We to the gods our impious acts ascribe;
First recompense with death their creatures' toil,
Then call the blessed above to share the spoil:
The fairest victim must the powers appease;
So fatal 'tis sometimes, too much to please!
A purple fillet his broad brows adorns,
With flowery garlands crowned, and gilded horns;
He hears the murderous prayer the priest prefers,
But understands not, 'tis his doom he hears;
Beholds the meal betwixt his temples cast,
The fruit and product of his labours past;
And in the water views, perhaps, the knife
Uplifted, to deprive him of his life;
Then, broken up alive, his entrails sees
Torn out, for priests to inspect the gods' decrees.
"'From whence, O mortal men, this gust of blood
Have you derived, and interdicted food?
Be taught by me this dire delight to shun,
Warned by my precepts, by my practice won;
And when you eat the well-deserving beast,
Think, on the labourer of your field you feast!

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"'Now since the God inspires me to proceed,
Be that whate'er inspiring Power obeyed.
For I will sing of mighty mysteries,
Of truths concealed before from human eyes,
Dark oracles unveil, and open all the skies.
Pleased as I am to walk along the sphere
Of shining stars, and travel with the year,
To leave the heavy earth, and scale the height
Of Atlas, who supports the heavenly weight;
To look from upper light, and thence survey
Mistaken mortals wandering from the way,
And, wanting wisdom, fearful for the state
Of future things, and trembling at their fate!
"'Those I would teach; and by right reason bring
To think of death, as but an idle thing.
Why thus affrighted at an empty name,
A dream of darkness, and fictitious flame?
Vain themes of wit, which but in poems pass,
And fables of a world, that never was!
What feels the body when the soul expires,
By time corrupted, or consumed by fires?
Nor dies the spirit, but new life repeats
In other forms, and only changes seats.
"'Even I, who these mysterious truths declare,
Was once Euphorbus in the Trojan war;
My name and lineage I remember well,
And how in fight by Sparta's king I fell.
In Argive Juno's fane I late beheld
My buckler hung on high, and owned my former shield.
Then death, so called, is but old matter dressed
In some new figure, and a varied vest;
Thus all things are but altered, nothing dies,
And here and there the unbodied spirit flies,
By time, or force, or sickness dispossest,
And lodges, where it lights, in man or beast;

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Or hunts without, till ready limbs it find,
And actuates those according to their kind;
From tenement to tenement is tossed;
The soul is still the same, the figure only lost:
And as the softened wax new seals receives,
This face assumes, and that impression leaves;
Now called by one, now by another name,
The form is only changed, the wax is still the same:
So death, so called, can but the form deface;
The immortal soul flies out in empty space,
To seek her fortune in some other place.
"'Then let not piety be put to flight,
To please the taste of glutton appetite;
But suffer inmate souls secure to dwell,
Lest from their seats your parents you expel;
With rabid hunger feed upon your kind,
Or from a beast dislodge a brother's mind.
"'And since, like Tiphys, parting from the shore,
In ample seas I sail, and depths untried before,
This let me further add, that nature knows
No steadfast station, but or ebbs, or flows;
Ever in motion, she destroys her old,
And casts new figures in another mould.
Even times are in perpetual flux, and run,
Like rivers from their fountain, rolling on.
For time, no more than streams, is at a stay;
The flying hour is ever on her way;
And as the fountain still supplies her store,
The wave behind impels the wave before,
Thus in successive course the minutes run,
And urge their predecessor minutes on,
Still moving, ever new; for former things
Are set aside, like abdicated kings;
And every moment alters what is done,
And innovates some act till then unknown.

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" 'Darkness, we see, emerges into light,
And shining suns descend to sable night;
Even heaven itself receives another dye,
When wearied animals in slumbers lie
Of midnight ease; another, when the grey
Of morn preludes the splendour of the day.
The disk of Phœbus, when he climbs on high,
Appears at first but as a bloodshot eye;
And when his chariot downward drives to bed,
His ball is with the same suffusion red;
But, mounted high in his meridian race,
All bright he shines, and with a better face;
For there, pure particles of ether flow,
Far from the infection of the world below.
" 'Nor equal light the unequal moon adorns,
Or in her wexing, or her waning horns;
For, every day she wanes, her face is less,
But, gathering into globe, she fattens at increase.
" 'Perceiv'st thou not the process of the year,
How the four seasons in four forms appear,
Resembling human life in every shape they wear?
Spring first, like infancy, shoots out her head,
With milky juice requiring to be fed;
Helpless, though fresh, and wanting to be led.
The green stem grows in stature and in size,
But only feeds with hope the farmer's eyes;
Then laughs the childish year, with flowerets crowned,
And lavishly perfumes the fields around;
But no substantial nourishment receives,
Infirm the stalks, unsolid are the leaves.
" 'Proceeding onward whence the year began,
The Summer grows adult, and ripens into man.
This season, as in men, is most replete
With kindly moisture, and prolific heat.
" 'Autumn succeeds, a sober tepid age,
Not froze with fear, nor boiling into rage;

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More than mature, and tending to decay,
When our brown locks repine to mix with odious
grey.
"'Last, Winter creeps along with tardy pace;
Sour is his front, and furrowed is his face.
His scalp if not dishonoured quite of hair,
The ragged fleece is thin, and thin is worse than
bare.
"'Even our own bodies daily change receive;
Some part of what was theirs before they leave,
Nor are to-day what yesterday they were;
Nor the whole same to-morrow will appear.
"'Time was, when we were sowed, and just
began,
From some few fruitful drops, the promise of a man;
Then Nature's hand (fermented as it was)
Moulded to shape the soft, coagulated mass;
And when the little man was fully formed,
The breathless embryo with a spirit warmed;
But when the mother's throes begin to come,
The creature, pent within the narrow room,
Breaks his blind prison, pushing to repair
His stifled breath, and draw the living air;
Cast on the margin of the world he lies,
A helpless babe, but by instinct he cries.
He next essays to walk, but, downward pressed,
On four feet imitates his brother beast:
By slow degrees he gathers from the ground
His legs, and to the rolling chair* is bound;
Then walks alone: a horseman now become,
He rides a stick, and travels round the room:
In time he vaunts among his youthful peers,
Strong-boned, and strung with nerves, in pride
of years:

* [The "rolling-chair," or go-cart, and the stick are not in Ovid.—Ed.]

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He runs with mettle his first merry stage,
Maintains the next, abated of his rage,
But manages his strength, and spares his age.
Heavy the third, and stiff, he sinks apace,
And, though 'tis down-hill all, but creeps along the race.
Now sapless on the verge of death he stands,
Contemplating his former feet, and hands;
And, Milo-like, his slackened sinews sees,
And withered arms, once fit to cope with Hercules,
Unable now to shake, much less to tear, the trees.
" 'So Helen wept, when her too faithful glass
Reflected to her eyes the ruins of her face;
Wondering what charms her ravishers could spy,
To force her twice, or even but once enjoy!
"'Thy teeth, devouring Time, thine, envious Age,
On things below still exercise your rage;
With venomed grinders you corrupt your meat,
And then, at lingering meals, the morsels eat.
" 'Nor those, which elements we call, abide,
Nor to this figure, nor to that, are tied;
For this eternal world is said of old
But four prolific principles to hold,
Four different bodies; two to heaven ascend,
And other two down to the centre tend.
Fire, first, with wings expanded mounts on high,
Pure, void of weight, and dwells in upper sky;
Then Air, because unclogged in empty space,
Flies after fire, and claims the second place;
But weighty Water, as her nature guides,
Lies on the lap of Earth; and mother Earth subsides.
" 'All things are mixt with these, which all contain,
And into these are all resolved again.
Earth rarifies to dew; expanded more,
The subtle dew in air begins to soar,

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Spreads as she flies, and, weary of her name,
Extenuates still, and changes into flame;
Thus having by degrees perfection won,
Restless, they soon untwist the web they spun;
And fire begins to lose her radiant hue,
Mixed with gross air, and air descends to dew;
And dew, condensing, does her form forego,
And sinks, a heavy lump of earth, below.
"'Thus are their figures never at a stand,
But changed by Nature's innovating hand;
All things are altered, nothing is destroyed,
The shifted scene for some new show employed.
"'Then, to be born, is to begin to be
Some other thing we were not formerly;
And what we call to die, is not to appear,
Or be the thing that formerly we were.
Those very elements, which we partake
Alive, when dead, some other bodies make;
Translated grow, have sense, or can discourse;
But death on deathless substance has no force.
"'That forms are changed I grant, that nothing can
Continue in the figure it began:
The golden age to silver was debased;
To copper that; our metal came at last.
"'The face of places, and their forms, decay,
And that is solid earth, that once was sea;
Seas, in their turn, retreating from the shore,
Make solid land what ocean was before;
And far from strands are shells of fishes found,
And rusty anchors fixed on mountain ground;
And what were fields before, now washed and worn
By falling floods from high, to valleys turn,
And, crumbling still, descend to level lands;
And lakes, and trembling bogs, are barren sands;

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And the parched desert floats in streams unknown,
Wondering to drink of waters not her own.
"'Here nature living fountains opes; and there
Seals up the wombs where living fountains were;
Or earthquakes stop their ancient course, and bring
Diverted streams to feed a distant spring.
So Lycus, swallowed up, is seen no more,
But, far from thence, knocks out another door.
Thus Erasinus dives; and blind in earth
Runs on, and gropes his way to second birth,
Starts up in Argos meads, and shakes his locks
Around the fields, and fattens all the flocks.
So Mysus by another way is led,
And, grown a river, now disdains their head;
Forgets his humble birth, his name forsakes,
And the proud title of Caicus takes.
Large Amenane, impure with yellow sands,
Runs rapid often, and as often stands;
And here he threats the drunken fields to drown,
And there his dugs deny to give their liquor down.
"'Anigros once did wholesome draughts afford,
But now his deadly waters are abhorred;
Since, hurt by Hercules, as fame resounds,
The Centaur* in his current washed his wounds.
The streams of Hypanis are sweet no more,
But, brackish, lose the taste they had before.
Antissa, Pharos, Tyre, in seas were pent,
Once isles, but now increase the continent;
While the Leucadian coast, mainland before,
By rushing seas is severed from the shore.

* Nessus, mortally wounded by Hercules with a poisoned arrow.

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So Zancle to the Italian earth was tied,
And men once walked where ships at anchor ride;
Till Neptune overlooked the narrow way,
And in disdain poured in the conquering sea.
"'Two cities that adorned the Achaian ground,
Buris and Helice, no more are found,
But, whelmed beneath a lake, are sunk and drowned;
And boatmen through the crystal water show,
To wondering passengers, the walls below.
"'Near Trœzen stands a hill, exposed in air
To winter winds, of leafy shadows bare:
This once was level ground; but (strange to tell)
The included vapours, that in caverns dwell,
Labouring with colic pangs, and close confined,
In vain sought issue for the rumbling wind;
Yet still they heaved for vent, and heaving still,
Enlarged the concave, and shot up the hill;
As breath extends a bladder, or the skins
Of goats are blown to inclose the hoarded wines.
The mountain yet retains a mountain's face,
And gathered rubbish heals the hollow space.
"'Of many wonders, which I heard or knew,
Retrenching most, I will relate but few.
What, are not springs with qualities opposed
Endued at seasons, and at seasons lost?
Thrice in a day, thine, Ammon, change their form,
Cold at high noon, at morn and evening warm;
Thine, Athaman, will kindle wood, if thrown
On the piled earth, and in the waning moon.
The Thracians have a stream, if any try
The taste, his hardened bowels petrify;
Whate'er it touches it converts to stones,
And makes a marble pavement where it runs.

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"'Crathis, and Sybaris her sister flood,
That slide through our Calabrian neighbour wood,
With gold and amber dye the shining hair,
And thither youth resort; for who would not be fair?
"'But stranger virtues yet in streams we find;
Some change not only bodies, but the mind.
Who has not heard of Salmacis obscene,
Whose waters into women soften men?
Of Æthiopian lakes, which turn the brain
To madness, or in heavy sleep constrain?
Clytorean streams the love of wine expel,
(Such is the virtue of the abstemious well,)
Whether the colder nymph, that rules the flood,
Extinguishes, and balks the drunken God;
Or that Melampus (so have some assured)
When the mad Prœtides with charms he cured,
And powerful herbs, both charms and simples cast
Into the sober spring, where still their virtues last.
"'Unlike effects Lyncestis will produce;
Who drinks his waters, though with moderate use,
Reels as with wine, and sees with double sight,
His heels too heavy, and his head too light.
Ladon, once Pheneos, an Arcadian stream,
(Ambiguous in the effects, as in the name,)
By day is wholesome beverage; but is thought
By night infected, and a deadly draught.
"'Thus running rivers, and the standing lake,
Now of these virtues, now of those partake.
Time was (and all things time and fate obey)
When fast Ortygia floated on the sea;
Such were Cyanean isles, when Typhis steered
Betwixt their straits, and their collision feared;

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They swam where now they sit; and, firmly joined,
Secure of rooting up, resist the wind.
Nor Ætna, vomiting sulphureous fire,
Will ever belch; for sulphur will expire,
The veins exhausted of the liquid store;
Time was she cast no flames; in time will cast no more.
"'For, whether earth's an animal, and air
Imbibes, her lungs with coolness to repair,
And what she sucks remits, she still requires
Inlets for air, and outlets for her fires;
When tortured with convulsive fits she shakes,
That motion chokes the vent, till other vent she makes;
Or when the winds in hollow caves are closed,
And subtile spirits find that way opposed,
They toss up flints in air; the flints that hide
The seeds of fire, thus tossed in air, collide,
Kindling the sulphur, till, the fuel spent,
The cave is cooled, and the fierce winds relent.
Or whether sulphur, catching fire, feeds on
Its unctuous parts, till, all the matter gone,
The flames no more ascend; for earth supplies
The fat that feeds them; and when earth denies
That food, by length of time consumed, the fire,
Famished for want of fuel, must expire.
"'A race of men there are, as fame has told,
Who, shivering, suffer Hyperborean cold,
Till, nine times bathing in Minerva's lake,
Soft feathers to defend their naked sides they take.
'Tis said, the Scythian wives (believe who will)
Transform themselves to birds by magic skill;
Smeared over with an oil of wondrous might,
That adds new pinions to their airy flight.

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"'But this by sure experiment we know,
That living creatures from corruption grow:
Hide in a hollow pit a slaughtered steer,
Bees from his putrid bowels will appear;
Who, like their parents, haunt the fields, and bring
Their honey-harvest home, and hope another spring.
The warlike steed is multiplied, we find,
To wasps and hornets of the warrior kind.
Cut from a crab his crooked claws, and hide
The rest in earth, a scorpion thence will glide,
And shoot his sting; his tail, in circles tossed,
Refers* the limbs his backward father lost;
And worms, that stretch on leaves their filmy loom,
Crawl from their bags, and butterflies become.
Even slime begets the frogs' loquacious race;
Short of their feet at first, in little space
With arms and legs endued, long leaps they take,
Raised on their hinder part, and swim the lake,
And waves repel: for nature gives their kind,
To that intent, a length of legs behind.
"'The cubs of bears a living lump appear,
When whelped, and no determined figure wear.
Their mother licks them into shape, and gives
As much of form, as she herself receives.
"'The grubs from their sexangular abode
Crawl out unfinished, like the maggots' brood,
Trunks without limbs; till time at leisure brings
The thighs they wanted, and their tardy wings.
"'The bird who draws the car of Juno, vain
Of her crowned head, and of her starry train;
And he that bears the artillery of Jove,
The strong-pounced eagle, and the billing dove,

* A Latinism, for "restores," or "presents anew."

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And all the feathered kind;—who could suppose
(But that from sight, the surest sense, he knows)
They from the included yolk, not ambient white,
arose?
"'There are who think the marrow of a man,
Which in the spine, while he was living, ran;
When dead, the pith corrupted, will become
A snake, and hiss within the hollow tomb.
"'All these receive their birth from other
things,
But from himself the phœnix only springs:
Self-born, begotten by the parent flame
In which he burned, another and the same:
Who not by corn or herbs his life sustains,
But the sweet essence of Amomum drains;
And watches the rich gums Arabia bears,
While yet in tender dew they drop their tears.
He (his five centuries of life fulfilled)
His nest on oaken boughs begins to build,
Or trembling tops of palm: and first he draws
The plan with his broad bill, and crooked claws,
Nature's artificers; on this the pile
Is formed, and rises round; then with the spoil
Of cassia, cinnamon, and stems of nard,
(For softness strewed beneath,) his funeral bed
is reared,
Funeral and bridal both; and all around
The borders with corruptless myrrh are crowned:
On this incumbent, till ethereal flame
First catches, then consumes, the costly frame;
Consumes him too, as on the pile he lies;
He lived on odours, and in odours dies.
"'An infant phœnix from the former springs,
His father's heir, and from his tender wings
Shakes off his parent dust; his method he pursues,
And the same lease of life on the same terms
renews.

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When, grown to manhood, he begins his reign,
And with stiff pinions can his flight sustain,
He lightens of its load the tree that bore
His father's royal sepulchre before,
And his own cradle; this with pious care
Placed on his back, he cuts the buxom * air,
Seeks the sun's city, and his sacred church,
And decently lays down his burden in the porch.
"'A wonder more amazing would we find?
The Hyæna shows it, of a double kind,
Varying the sexes in alternate years,
In one begets, and in another bears.
The thin cameleon, fed with air, receives
The colour of the thing to which he cleaves.
"'India, when conquered, on the conquering God
For planted vines the sharp-eyed lynx bestowed,
Whose urine, shed before it touches earth,
Congeals in air, and gives to gems their birth.
So coral, soft and white in ocean's bed,
Comes hardened up in air, and glows with red.
"'All changing species should my song recite,
Before I ceased, would change the day to night.
Nations and empires flourish and decay,
By turns command, and in their turns obey;
Time softens hardy people, time again
Hardens to war a soft, unwarlike train.
Thus Troy for ten long years her foes withstood,
And daily bleeding bore the expense of blood;
Now for thick streets it shows an empty space,
Or only filled with tombs of her own perished race;
Herself becomes the sepulchre of what she was.
"'Mycene, Sparta, Thebes of mighty fame,
Are vanished out of substance into name,

* [In the literal sense, "yielding."—Ed.]

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And Dardan Rome, that just begins to rise
On Tiber's banks, in time shall mate the skies;
Widening her bounds, and working on her way,
Even now she meditates imperial sway:
Yet this is change, but she by changing thrives,
Like moons new born, and in her cradle strives
To fill her infant horns; an hour shall come,
When the round world shall be contained in Rome.
"'For thus old saws foretell, and Helenus
Anchises' drooping son enlivened thus,
When Ilium now was in a sinking state,
And he was doubtful of his future fate:—
"O goddess born, with thy hard fortune strive,
Troy never can be lost, and thou alive;
Thy passage thou shalt free through fire and sword,
And Troy in foreign lands shall be restored.
In happier fields a rising town I see,
Greater than what e'er was, or is, or e'er shall be;
And heaven yet owes the world a race derived from thee.
Sages and chiefs, of other lineage born,
The city shall extend, extended shall adorn;
But from Iulus he must draw his birth,
By whom thy Rome shall rule the conquered earth;
Whom heaven will lend mankind on earth to reign,
And late require the precious pledge again."
This Helenus to great Æneas told,
Which I retain, e'er since in other mould
My soul was clothed; and now rejoice to view
My country walls rebuilt, and Troy revived anew;
Raised by the fall; decreed by loss to gain;
Enslaved but to be free, and conquered but to reign.

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" 'Tis time my hard-mouthed coursers to control,
Apt to run riot, and transgress the goal,
And therefore I conclude: whatever lies
In earth, or flits in air, or fills the skies,
All suffer change; and we, that are of soul
And body mixed, are members of the whole.
Then when our sires, or grandsires, shall forsake
The forms of men, and brutal figures take,
Thus housed, securely let their spirits rest,
Nor violate thy father in the beast,
Thy friend, thy brother, any of thy kin;
If none of these, yet there 's a man within.
Oh spare to make a Thyestean meal,
To inclose his body, and his soul expel.
" 'Ill customs by degrees to habits rise,
Ill habits soon become exalted vice:
What more advance can mortals make in sin,
So near perfection, who with blood begin?
Deaf to the calf that lies beneath the knife,
Looks up, and from her butcher begs her life;
Deaf to the harmless kid, that, ere he dies,
All methods to procure thy mercy tries,
And imitates in vain thy children's cries.
Where will he stop, who feeds with household bread,
Then eats the poultry, which before he fed?
Let plough thy steers; that, when they lose their breath,
To nature, not to thee, they may impute their death.
Let goats for food their loaded udders lend,
And sheep from winter-cold thy sides defend;
But neither springes, nets, nor snares employ,
And be no more ingenious to destroy.
Free as in air, let birds on earth remain,
Nor let insidious glue their wings constrain;

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Nor opening hounds the trembling stag affright,
Nor purple feathers intercept his flight; *
Nor hooks concealed in baits for fish prepare,
Nor lines to heave them twinkling up in air.
" 'Take not away the life you cannot give;
For all things have an equal right to live.
Kill noxious creatures, where 'tis sin to save;
This only just prerogative we have:
But nourish life with vegetable food,
And shun the sacrilegious taste of blood.'
"These precepts by the Samian sage were taught,
Which godlike Numa to the Sabines brought,
And thence transferred to Rome, by gift his own;
A willing people, and an offered throne.
O happy monarch, sent by heaven to bless
A savage nation with soft arts of peace;
To teach religion, rapine to restrain,
Give laws to lust, and sacrifice ordain:
Himself a saint, a goddess was his bride,
And all the muses o'er his acts preside."

* [Alluding to the plan of fastening bright feathers to a string to frighten game.—Ed.]

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TRANSLATIONS

FROM

OVID'S ART OF LOVE

[AND

AMORES.]

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THE FIRST BOOK

OF

OVID'S ART OF LOVE.

In Cupid's school whoe'er would take degree,
Must learn his rudiments, by reading me.
Seaman with sailing arts their vessels move;
Art guides the chariot, art instructs to love.
Of ships and chariots others know the rule;
But I am master in Love's mighty school.
Cupid indeed is obstinate and wild,
A stubborn god, but yet the god 's a child:
Easy to govern in his tender age,
Like fierce Achilles in his pupillage:
That hero, born for conquest, trembling stood
Before the Centaur, and received the rod.
As Chiron mollified his cruel mind
With art, and taught his warlike hands to wind
The silver strings of his melodious lyre,
So Love's fair goddess does my soul inspire,
To teach her softer arts, to soothe the mind,
And smooth the rugged breasts of humankind.
  Yet Cupid and Achilles, each with scorn
And rage were filled, and both were goddess-born.

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The bull, reclaimed and yoked, the burden draws;
The horse receives the bit within his jaws;
And stubborn Love shall bend beneath my sway,
Though struggling oft he strives to disobey.
He shakes his torch, he wounds me with his darts;
But vain his force, and vainer are his arts.
The more he burns my soul, or wounds my sight,
The more he teaches to revenge the spite.
I boast no aid the Delphian god affords,
Nor auspice from the flight of chattering birds;
Nor Clio, nor her sisters, have I seen,
As Hesiod saw them on the shady green:
Experience makes my work; a truth so tried
You may believe, and Venus be my guide.
Far hence, ye vestals, be, who bind your hair;
And wives, who gowns below your ankles wear.
I sing the brothels loose and unconfined,
The unpunishable pleasures of the kind;
Which all alike, for love, or money, find.
You, who in Cupid's rolls inscribe your name,
First seek an object worthy of your flame;
Then strive, with art, your lady's mind to gain;
And, last, provide your love may long remain.
On these three precepts all my works shall move;
These are the rules and principles of love.
Before your youth with marriage is opprest,
Make choice of one who suits your humour best;
And such a damsel drops not from the sky,
She must be sought for with a curious eye.
The wary angler, in the winding brook,
Knows what the fish, and where to bait his hook.
The fowler and the huntsman know by name
The certain haunts and harbour of their game.
So must the lover beat the likeliest grounds;
The assembly where his quarry most abounds.
Nor shall my novice wander far astray;
These rules shall put him in the ready way.

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Thou shalt not sail around the continent,
As far as Perseus, or as Paris went;
For Rome alone affords thee such a store,
As all the world can hardly show thee more:
The face of heaven with fewer stars is crowned,
Than beauties in the Roman sphere are found.
  Whether thy love is bent on blooming youth,
On dawning sweetness in unartful truth,
Or courts the juicy joys of riper growth;
Here may'st thou find thy full desires in both.
Or if autumnal beauties please thy sight,
(An age that knows to give, and take delight,)
Millions of matrons of the graver sort,
In common prudence, will not balk the sport.
  In summer heats thou need'st but only go
To Pompey's cool and shady portico;
Or Concord's fane; or that proud edifice,
Whose turrets near the bawdy suburb rise;
Or to that other portico, where stands
The cruel father urging his commands,
And fifty daughters wait the time of rest,
To plunge their poniards in the bridegroom's breast;
Or Venus' temple, where, on annual nights,
They mourn Adonis with Assyrian rites.
Nor shun the Jewish walk, where the foul drove,
On Sabbaths, rest from everything but love:
Nor Isis' temple; for that sacred whore
Makes others what to Jove she was before.
And if the hall itself be not belied,
Even there the cause of love is often tried;
Near it at least, or in the palace-yard,
From whence the noisy combatants are heard,
The crafty counsellors, in formal gown,
There gain another's cause, but lose their own.
There eloquence is nonplussed in the suit,
And lawyers, who had words at will, are mute.

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Venus, from her adjoining temple, smiles,
To see them caught in their litigious wiles.
Grave senators lead home the youthful dame,
Returning clients, when they patrons came.
But, above all, the play-house is the place;
There 's choice of quarry in that narrow chase.
There take thy stand, and, sharply looking out,
Soon may'st thou find a mistress in the rout,
For length of time, or for a single bout.
The theatres are buries * for the fair,
Like ants on mole-hills thither they repair;
Like bees to hives, so numerously they throng,
It may be said, they to that place belong.
Thither they swarm, who have the public voice;
There choose, if plenty not distracts thy choice.
To see, and to be seen, in heaps they run;
Some to undo, and some to be undone.
From Romulus the rise of plays began,
To his new subjects a commodious man;
Who, his unmarried soldiers to supply,
Took care the commonwealth should multiply;
Providing Sabine women for his braves,
Like a true king, to get a race of slaves.
His play-house not of Parian marble made,
Nor was it spread with purple sails for shade;
The stage with rushes, or with leaves, they strewed,
No scenes in prospect, no machining god.
On rows of homely turf they sat to see,
Crowned with the wreaths of every common tree.
There, while they sat in rustic majesty,
Each lover had his mistress in his eye;
And whom he saw most suiting to his mind,
For joys of matrimonial rape designed.

* ["Burries," "burrows." By printing "berries," as Scott does, the sense is obscured to the modern reader.—Ed.]

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Scarce could they wait the plaudit in their haste;
But, ere the dances and the song were past,
The monarch gave the signal from his throne,
And, rising, bade his merry men fall on.
The martial crew, like soldiers ready prest,
Just at the word, (the word too was, "The best,")*
With joyful cries each other animate;
Some choose, and some at hazard seize their mate.
As doves from eagles, or from wolves the lambs,
So from their lawless lovers fly the dames.
Their fear was one, but not one face of fear;
Some rend the lovely tresses of their hair;
Some shriek, and some are struck with dumb despair.
Her absent mother one invokes in vain;
One stands amazed not daring to complain;
The nimbler trust their feet, the slow remain.
But nought availing, all are captives led,
Trembling and blushing, to the genial bed.
She who too long resisted, or denied,
The lusty lover made by force a bride;
And, with superior strength, compelled her to his side.
Then soothed her thus:—"My soul's far better part,
Cease weeping, nor afflict thy tender heart;
For what thy father to thy mother was,
That faith to thee, that solemn vow I pass."
Thus Romulus became so popular;
This was the way to thrive in peace and war.
To pay his army, and fresh whores to bring,—
Who would not fight for such a gracious king?
Thus love in theatres did first improve,
And theatres are still the scenes of love.

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* [Alluding to a well-known toast—a favourite with our straightforward fathers.—ED.]

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Nor shun the chariot's, and the courser's race;
The circus is no inconvenient place.
No need is there of talking on the hand;
Nor nods, nor signs, which lovers understand:
But boldly next the fair your seat provide;
Close as you can to hers, and side by side.
Pleased or unpleased, no matter, crowding sit;
For so the laws of public shows permit.
Then find occasion to begin discourse;
Inquire, whose chariot this, and whose that horse?
To whatsoever side she is inclined,
Suit all your inclinations to her mind;
Like what she likes; from thence your court begin;
And whom she favours, wish that he may win.
But when the statues of the deities,
In chariots rolled, appear before the prize;
When Venus comes, with deep devotion rise.
If dust be on her lap, or grains of sand,
Brush both away with your officious hand;
If none be there, yet brush that nothing thence,
And still to touch her lap make some pretence.
Touch anything of hers; and if her train
Sweep on the ground, let it not sweep in vain,
But gently take it up, and wipe it clean;
And while you wipe it, with observing eyes,
Who knows but you may see her naked thighs!
Observe, who sits behind her; and beware,
Lest his encroaching knee should press the fair.
Light service takes light minds; for some can tell
Of favours won, by laying cushions well:
By fanning faces, some their fortune meet;
And some by laying footstools for their feet.
These overtures of love the circus gives;
Nor at the sword-play less the lover thrives;

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For there the son of Venus fights his prize,
And deepest wounds are oft received from eyes.
One, while the crowd their acclamations make,
Or while he bets, and puts his ring to stake,
Is struck from far, and feels the flying dart,
And of the spectacle is made a part.
  Cæsar would represent a naval fight,
For his own honour, and for Rome's delight;
From either sea the youths and maidens come,
And all the world was then contained in Rome.
In this vast concourse, in this choice of game,
What Roman heart but felt a foreign flame?
Once more our prince prepares to make us glad;
And the remaining East to Rome will add.
Rejoice, ye Roman soldiers, in your urns;
Your ensigns from the Parthians shall return,
And the slain Crassi shall no longer mourn.
A youth is sent those trophies to demand,
And bears his father's thunder in his hand;
Doubt not the imperial boy in wars unseen,
In childhood all of Cæsar's race are men;
Celestial seeds shoot out before their day,
Prevent their years, and brook no dull delay:
Thus infant Hercules the snakes did press,
And in his cradle did his sire confess;
Bacchus, a boy, yet like a hero fought,
And early spoils from conquered India brought.
Thus you your father's troops shall lead to fight,
And thus shall vanquish in your father's right.
These rudiments you to your lineage owe;
Born to increase your titles, as you grow.
Brethren you had, revenge your brethren slain;
You have a father, and his rights maintain;
Armed by your country's parent, and your own,
Redeem your country, and restore his throne.
Your enemies assert an impious cause;
You fight both for divine and human laws.

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Already in their cause they are o'ercome;
Subject them too, by force of arms, to Rome.
Great father Mars with greater Cæsar join,
To give a prosperous omen to your line;
One of you is, and one shall be divine.
I prophesy you shall, you shall o'ercome;
My verse shall bring you back in triumph home.
Speak in my verse, exhort to loud alarms;
Oh were my numbers equal to your arms!
Then would I sing the Parthians' overthrow;
Their shot averse sent from a flying bow:
The Parthians, who already flying fight,
Already give an omen of their flight.
Oh when will come the day, by heaven designed,
When thou, the best and fairest of mankind,
Drawn by white horses shalt in triumph ride,
With conquered slaves attending on thy side;
Slaves, that no longer can be safe in flight;
O glorious object, O surprising sight,
O day of public joy, too good to end in night!
On such a day, if thou, and, next to thee,
Some beauty sits, the spectacle to see;
If she inquire the names of conquered kings,
Of mountains, rivers, and their hidden springs,
Answer to all thou knowest; and, if need be,
Of things unknown seem to speak knowingly.
This is Euphrates, crowned with reeds; and there
Flows the swift Tigris with his sea-green hair.
Invent new names of things unknown before;
Call this Armenia, that the Caspian shore;
Call this a Mede, and that a Parthian youth;
Talk probably, no matter for the truth.
In feasts, as at our shows, new means abound;
More pleasure there than that of wine is found.
The Paphian goddess there her ambush lays;
And Love betwixt the horns of Bacchus plays;

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Desires increase at every swelling draught;
Brisk vapours add new vigour to the thought.
There Cupid's purple wings no flight afford,
But, wet with wine, he flutters on the board;
He shakes his pinions, but he cannot move;
Fixed he remains, and turns a maudlin love.
Wine warms the blood, and makes the spirits flow;
Care flies, and wrinkles from the forehead go;
Exalts the poor, invigorates the weak;
Gives mirth and laughter, and a rosy cheek.
Bold truths it speaks, and, spoken, dares maintain,
And brings our old simplicity again.
Love sparkles in the cup, and fills it higher;
Wine feeds the flames, and fuel adds to fire.
But choose no mistress in thy drunken fit;
Wine gilds too much their beauties and their wit.
Nor trust thy judgment when the tapers dance;
But sober, and by day, thy suit advance.
By daylight Paris judged the beauteous three,
And for the fairest did the prize decree.
Night is a cheat, and all deformities
Are hid, or lessened, in her dark disguise.
The sun's fair light each error will confess,
In face, in shape, in jewels, and in dress.
Why name I every place where youths abound?
'Tis loss of time, and a too fruitful ground.
The Baian baths, where ships at anchor ride,
And wholesome streams from sulphur fountains glide;
Where wounded youths are by experience taught,
The waters are less healthful than they thought;
Or Dian's fane, which near the suburb lies,
Where priests, for their promotion, fight a prize.
That maiden goddess is Love's mortal foe,
And much from her his subjects undergo.

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Thus far the sportful Muse, with myrtle bound,
Has sung where lovely lasses may be found.
Now let me sing, how she, who wounds your mind,
With art may be to cure your wounds inclined.
Young nobles, to my laws attention lend;
And all you, vulgar of my school, attend.
First then believe, all women may be won;
Attempt with confidence, the work is done.
The grasshopper shall first forbear to sing
In summer season, or the birds in spring,
Than women can resist your flattering skill;
Even she will yield, who swears she never will.
To secret pleasure both the sexes move;
But women most, who most dissemble love.
'Twere best for us, if they would first declare,
Avow their passion, and submit to prayer.
The cow, by lowing, tells the bull her flame;
The neighing mare invites her stallion to the game.
Man is more temperate in his lust than they,
And more than women can his passion sway.
Byblis, we know, did first her love declare,
And had recourse to death in her despair.
Her brother she, her father Myrrha sought,
And loved, but loved not as a daughter ought.
Now from a tree she stills her odorous tears,
Which yet the name of her who shed them bears.
In Ida's shady vale a bull appeared,
White as the snow, the fairest of the herd;
A beauty-spot of black there only rose,
Betwixt his equal horns and ample brows;
The love and wish of all the Cretan cows.
The queen beheld him as his head he reared,
And envied every leap he gave the herd;
A secret fire she nourished in her breast,
And hated every heifer he caressed.

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A story known, and known for true, I tell;
Nor Crete, though lying, can the truth conceal.
She cut him grass; (so much can love command,)
She stroked, she fed him with her royal hand;
Was pleased in pastures with the herd to roam;
And Minos by the bull was overcome.
Cease, queen, with gems t'adorn thy beauteous brows;
The monarch of thy heart no jewel knows.
Nor in thy glass compose thy looks and eyes;
Secure from all thy charms thy lover lies;
Yet trust thy mirror, when it tells thee true;
Thou art no heifer to allure his view.
Soon wouldst thou quit thy royal diadem
To thy fair rivals, to be horned like them.
If Minos please, no lover seek to find;
If not, at least seek one of human kind.
The wretched queen the Cretan court forsakes;
In woods and wilds her habitation makes:
She curses every beauteous cow she sees;
"Ah, why dost thou my lord and master please!
And think'st, ungrateful creature as thou art,
With frisking awkwardly, to gain his heart!"
She said, and straight commands, with frowning look,
To put her, undeserving, to the yoke;
Or feigns some holy rites of sacrifice,
And sees her rival's death with joyful eyes:
Then, when the bloody priest has done his part,
Pleased, in her hand she holds the beating heart;
Nor from a scornful taunt can scarce refrain;
"Go, fool, and strive to please my love again."
Now she would be Europa, Io now;
(One bore a bull, and one was made a cow.)
Yet she at last her brutal bliss obtained,
And in a wooden cow the bull sustained;

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Filled with his seed, accomplished her desire,
Till by his form the son betrayed the sire.*
If Atreus' wife to incest had not run,
(But, ah, how hard it is to love but one!)
His coursers Phœbus had not driven away,
To shun that sight, and interrupt the day.
Thy daughter, Nisus,† pulled thy purple hair,
And barking sea-dogs yet her bowels tear.
At sea and land Atrides saved his life,
Yet fell a prey to his adulterous wife.
Who knows not what revenge Medea sought,
When the slain offspring bore the father's fault?
Thus Phœnix did a woman's love bewail;
And thus Hippolytus by Phædra fell.
These crimes revengeful matrons did commit;
Hotter their lust, and sharper is their wit.
Doubt not from them an easy victory;
Scarce of a thousand dames will one deny.
All women are content that men should woo;
She who complains, and she who will not do.
Rest then secure, whate'er thy luck may prove,
Not to be hated for declaring love.
And yet how canst thou miss, since woman-kind
Is frail and vain, and still to change inclined?
Old husbands and stale gallants they despise;
And more another's, than their own, they prize.
A larger crop adorns our neighbour's field;
More milk his kine from swelling udders yield.
First gain the maid; by her thou shalt be sure
A free access and easy to procure:
Who knows what to her office does belong,
Is in the secret, and can hold her tongue,
Bribe her with gifts, with promises, and prayers;
For her good word goes far in love-affairs.

* The Minotaur. † Scylla.

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The time and fit occasion leave to her,
When she most aptly can thy suit prefer.
The time for maids to fire their lady's blood,
Is, when they find her in a merry mood.
When all things at her wish and pleasure move,
Her heart is open then, and free to love;
Then mirth and wantonness to lust betray,
And smooth the passage to the lover's way.
Troy stood the siege, when filled with anxious care;
One merry fit concluded all the war.
If some fair rival vex her jealous mind,
Offer thy service to revenge in kind.
Instruct the damsel, while she combs her hair,
To raise the choler of that injured fair;
And, sighing, make her mistress understand,
She has the means of vengeance in her hand:
And swear thou languishest and diest for her.
Then let her lose no time, but push at all;
For women soon are raised, and soon they fall.
Give their first fury leisure to relent,
They melt like ice, and suddenly repent.
To enjoy the maid, will that thy suit advance?
'Tis a hard question, and a doubtful chance.
One maid, corrupted, bawds the better for 't;
Another for herself would keep the sport.
Thy business may be furthered or delayed;
But, by my counsel, let alone the maid;
Even though she should consent to do the feat,
The profit 's little, and the danger great.
I will not lead thee through a rugged road,
But, where the way lies open, safe, and broad.
Yet if thou find'st her very much thy friend,
And her good face her diligence commend,
Let the fair mistress have thy first embrace,
And let the maid come after in her place.

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But this I will advise, and mark my words;
For 'tis the best advice my skill affords:
If needs thou with the damsel wilt begin,
Before the attempt is made, make sure to win;
For then the secret better will be kept,
And she can tell no tales when once she 's dipt.
'Tis for the fowler's interest to beware,
The bird entangled should not 'scape the snare.
The fish, once pricked, avoids the bearded hook,
And spoils the sport of all the neighbouring brook.
But if the wench be thine, she makes thy way,
And, for thy sake, her mistress will betray;
Tell all she knows, and all she hears her say.
Keep well the counsel of thy faithful spy;
So shalt thou learn whene'er she treads awry.
All things the stations of their seasons keep,
And certain times there are to sow and reap.
Ploughmen and sailors for the season stay,
One to plough land, and one to plough the sea;
So should the lover wait the lucky day.
Then stop thy suit, it hurts not thy design;
But think, another hour she may be thine.
And when she celebrates her birth at home,
Or when she views the public shows of Rome,
Know, all thy visits then are troublesome.
Defer thy work, and put not then to sea,
For that 's a boding and a stormy day.
Else take thy time, and, when thou canst, begin;
To break a Jewish Sabbath, think no sin:
Nor even on superstitious days abstain;
Not when the Romans were at Allia slain.
Ill omens in her frowns are understood;
When she 's in humour, every day is good.
But than her birthday seldom comes a worse,
When bribes and presents must be sent of course;
And that 's a bloody day, that costs thy purse.

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Be staunch, yet parsimony will be vain;
The craving sex will still the lover drain.
No skill can shift them off, nor art remove;
They will be begging, when they know we love.
The merchant comes upon the appointed day,
Who shall before thy face his wares display;
To choose for her she craves thy kind advice;
Then begs again, to bargain for the price:
But when she has her purchase in her eye,
She hugs thee close, and kisses thee to buy:—
"'Tis what I want, and 'tis a pen'orth too;
In many years I will not trouble you."
If you complain you have no ready coin;
No matter, 'tis but writing of a line,
A little bill, not to be paid at sight;
Now curse the time when thou wert taught to write!
She keeps her birthday; you must send the cheer;
And she 'll be born a hundred times a year.
With daily lies she dribs thee into cost;
That ear-ring dropt a stone, that ring is lost.
They often borrow what they never pay,
Whate'er you lend her, think it thrown away.
Had I ten mouths and tongues to tell each art,
All would be wearied ere I told a part.
By letters, not by words, thy love begin;
And ford the dangerous passage with thy pen.
If to her heart thou aim'st to find the way,
Extremely flatter, and extremely pray.
Priam by prayers did Hector's body gain;
Nor is an angry God invoked in vain.
With promised gifts her easy mind bewitch;
For e'en the poor in promise may be rich.
Vain hopes awhile her appetite will stay,
'Tis a deceitful, but commodious way.
Who gives is mad; but make her still believe
'Twill come, and that 's the cheapest way to give.

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E'en barren lands fair promises afford;
Buy the lean harvest cheats the starving lord.
But not thy first enjoyment, lest it prove
Of bad example to thy future love:
But get it gratis, and she 'll give thee more,
For fear of losing what she gave before.
The losing gamester shakes the box in vain,
And bleeds, and loses on, in hopes to gain.
Write then, and in thy letter, as I said,
Let her with mighty promises be fed.
Cydippe by a letter was betrayed,
Writ on an apple to the unwary maid.
She read herself into a marriage-vow;
(And every cheat in love the gods allow.)
Learn eloquence, ye noble youth of Rome;
It will not only at the bar o'ercome:
Sweet words the people and the senate move;
But the chief end of eloquence is love.
But in thy letter hide thy moving arts;
Affect not to be thought a man of parts.
None but vain fools to simple women preach;
A learned letter oft has made a breach.
In a familiar style your thoughts convey,
And write such things as present you would say;
Such words as from the heart may seem to move;
'Tis wit enough, to make her think you love.
If sealed she sends it back, and will not read,
Yet hope, in time, the business may succeed.
In time the steer will to the yoke submit;
In time the restive horse will bear the bit;
Even the hard ploughshare use will wear away,
And stubborn steel in length of time decay.
Water is soft, and marble hard; and yet
We see soft water through hard marble eat.
Though late, yet Troy at length in flames expired;
And ten years more Penelope had tired.

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Perhaps thy lines unanswered she retained;
No matter, there 's a point already gained;
For she, who reads, in time will answer too:
Things must be left by just degrees to grow.
Perhaps she writes, but answers with disdain,
And sharply bids you not to write again:
What she requires, she fears you should accord;
The jilt would not be taken at her word.
Mean time, if she be carried in her chair,
Approach, but do not seem to know she 's there.
Speak softly, to delude the standers-by;
Or, if aloud, then speak ambiguously.
If sauntering in the portico she walk,
Move slowly too, for that 's a time for talk;
And sometimes follow, sometimes be her guide,
But when the crowd permits, go side by side.
Nor in the play-house let her sit alone;
For she 's the play-house, and the play, in one.
There thou may'st ogle, or by signs advance
Thy suit, and seem to touch her hand by chance.
Admire the dancer who her liking gains,
And pity in the play the lover's pains:
For her sweet sake the loss of time despise;
Sit while she sits, and when she rises, rise.
But dress not like a fop, nor curl your hair,
Nor with a pumice make your body bare;
Leave those effeminate and useless toys
To eunuchs, who can give no solid joys.
Neglect becomes a man; thus Theseus found;
Uncurled, uncombed, the nymph his wishes crowned.
The rough Hippolytus was Phædra's care;
And Venus thought the rude Adonis fair.
Be not too finical; but yet be clean,
And wear well-fashioned clothes, like other men.
Let not your teeth be yellow, or be foul,
Nor in wide shoes your feet too loosely roll;

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Of a black muzzle, and long beard, beware,
And let a skilful barber cut your hair;
Your nails be picked from filth, and even pared,
Nor let your nasty nostrils bud with beard;
Cure your unsavoury breath, gargle your throat,
And free your armpits from the ram and goat:
Dress not, in short, too little or too much;
And be not wholly French, nor wholly Dutch.
Now Bacchus calls me to his jolly rites;
Who would not follow, when a god invites?
He helps the poet, and his pen inspires,
Kind and indulgent to his former fires.
  Fair Ariadne wandered on the shore,
Forsaken now, and Theseus loved no more:
Loose was her gown, dishevelled was her hair,
Her bosom naked, and her feet were bare;
Exclaiming, on the water's brink she stood;
Her briny tears augment the briny flood.
She shrieked, and wept, and both became her face;
No posture could that heavenly form disgrace.
She beat her breast: "The traitor's gone," said she;
"What shall become of poor forsaken me?
What shall become"—she had not time for more,
The sounding cymbals rattled on the shore.
She swoons for fear, she falls upon the ground;
No vital heat was in her body found.
The Mimallonian dames about her stood,
And scudding satyrs ran before their God.
Silenus on his ass did next appear,
And held upon the mane; (the God was clear)
The drunken sire pursues, the dames retire;
Sometimes the drunken dames pursue the drunken sire.
At last he topples over on the plain;
The satyrs laugh, and bid him rise again.

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And now the God of Wine came driving on,
High on his chariot by swift tigers drawn.
Her colour, voice, and sense, forsook the fair;
Thrice did her trembling feet for flight prepare,
And thrice, affrighted, did her flight forbear.
She shook, like leaves of corn when tempests blow,
Or slender reeds that in the marshes grow.
To whom the God:—"Compose thy fearful mind;
In me a truer husband thou shalt find.
With heaven I will endow thee, and thy star
Shall with propitious light be seen afar,
And guide on seas the doubtful mariner."
He said, and from his chariot leaping light,
Lest the grim tigers should the nymph affright,
His brawny arms around her waist he threw;
(For Gods, whate'er they will, with ease can do)
And swiftly bore her thence: the attending throng
Shout at the sight, and sing the nuptial song.
Now in full bowls her sorrow she may steep;
The bridegroom's liquor lays the bride asleep.
But thou, when flowing cups in triumph ride,
And the loved nymph is seated by thy side,
Invoke the God, and all the mighty Powers,
That wine may not defraud thy genial hours.
Then in ambiguous words thy suit prefer,
Which she may know were all addrest to her.
In liquid purple letters write her name,
Which she may read, and, reading, find the flame.
Then may your eyes confess your mutual fires;
(For eyes have tongues, and glances tell desires;)
Whene'er she drinks, be first to take the cup,
And, where she laid her lips, the blessing sup.
When she to carving does her hand advance,
Put out thy own, and touch it as by chance,

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Thy service even her husband must attend:
(A husband is a most convenient friend.)
Seat the fool cuckold in the highest place,
And with thy garland his dull temples grace.
Whether below or equal in degree,
Let him be lord of all the company,
And what he says, be seconded by thee.
'Tis common to deceive through friendship's name;
But, common though it be, 'tis still to blame:
Thus factors frequently their trust betray,
And to themselves their masters' gains convey.
Drink to a certain pitch, and then give o'er;
Thy tongue and feet may stumble, drinking more.
Of drunken quarrels in her sight beware;
Pot-valour only serves to fright the fair.
Eurytion justly fell, by wine opprest,
For his rude riot at a wedding-feast.
Sing, if you have a voice; and show your parts
In dancing, if endued with dancing arts.
Do anything within your power to please;
Nay, even affect a seeming drunkenness:
Clip every word; and if by chance you speak
Too home, or if too broad a jest you break,
In your excuse the company will join,
And lay the fault upon the force of wine.
True drunkenness is subject to offend;
But when 'tis feigned, 'tis oft a lover's friend.
Then safely you may praise her beauteous face,
And call him happy, who is in her grace.
Her husband thinks himself the man designed;
But curse the cuckold in your secret mind.
When all are risen, and prepare to go,
Mix with the crowd, and tread upon her toe.
This is the proper time to make thy court;
For now she 's in the vein, and fit for sport.

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Lay bashfulness, that rustic virtue, by;
To manly confidence thy thoughts apply.
On fortune's foretop timely fix thy hold;
Now speak and speed, for Venus loves the bold.
No rules of rhetoric here I need afford;
Only begin, and trust the following word;
It will be witty of its own accord.
Act well the lover; let thy speech abound
In dying words, that represent thy wound;
Distrust not her belief; she will be moved;
All women think they merit to be loved.
Sometimes a man begins to love in jest,
And, after, feels the torment he professed.
For your own sakes be pitiful, ye fair;
For a feigned passion may a true prepare.
By flatteries we prevail on womankind;
As hollow banks by streams are undermined.
Tell her, her face is fair, her eyes are sweet;
Her taper fingers praise, and little feet.
Such praises even the chaste are pleased to hear;
Both maids and matrons hold their beauty dear.
Once naked Pallas with Jove's queen appeared,
And still they grieve that Venus was preferred.
Praise the proud peacock, and he spreads his train;
Be silent, and he pulls it in again.
Pleased is the courser in his rapid race;
Applaud his running, and he mends his pace.
But largely promise, and devoutly swear;
And, if need be, call every God to hear.
Jove sits above, forgiving with a smile
The perjuries that easy maids beguile.
He swore to Juno by the Stygian lake;
Forsworn, he dares not an example make,
Or punish falsehood, for his own dear sake.

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'Tis for our interest that the gods should be;
Let us believe them; I believe, they see,
And both reward, and punish equally.
Not that they live above like lazy drones,
Or kings below, supine upon their thrones.
Lead then your lives as present in their sight;
Be just in dealings, and defend the right;
By fraud betray not, nor oppress by might.
But 'tis a venial sin to cheat the fair;
All men have liberty of conscience there.
On cheating nymphs a cheat is well designed;
'Tis a profane and a deceitful kind.
'Tis said, that Egypt for nine years was dry,
Nor Nile did floods, nor heaven did rain supply.
A foreigner at length informed the king,
That slaughtered guests would kindly moisture bring.
The king replied:—"On thee the lot shall fall;
Be thou my guest, the sacrifice for all."
Thus Phaleris Perillus taught to low,
And made him season first the brazen cow.*
A rightful doom, the laws of nature cry,
'Tis, the artificers of death should die:
Thus, justly women suffer by deceit;
Their practice authorises us to cheat.
Beg her, with tears, thy warm desires to grant;
For tears will pierce a heart of adamant.
If tears will not be squeezed, then rub your eye,
Or 'noint the lids, and seem at least to cry.
Kiss, if you can; resistance if she make,
And will not give you kisses, let her take.

* The famous brazen bull of Phalaris is here, *rythmi gratia*, converted into a cow. The story of his inclosing Perillus, the inventor, in the engine which he had contrived, is well known.

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"Fie, fie, you naughty man," are words of course;
She struggles but to be subdued by force.
Kiss only soft, I charge you, and beware,
With your hard bristles not to brush the fair.
He who has gained a kiss, and gains no more,
Deserves to lose the bliss he got before.
If once she kiss, her meaning is exprest;
There wants but little pushing for the rest;
Which if thou dost not gain, by strength or art,
The name of clown then suits with thy desert;
'Tis downright dulness, and a shameful part.
Perhaps, she calls it force; but, if she 'scape,
She will not thank you for the omitted rape.
The sex is cunning to conceal their fires;
They would be forced e'en to their own desires
They seem to accuse you, with a downcast sight,
But in their souls confess you did them right.
Who might be forced, and yet untouched depart,
Thank with their tongues, but curse you with their heart.
Fair Phœbe and her sister did prefer
To their dull mates the noble ravisher.
What Deidamia did, in days of yore,
The tale is old, but worth the reading o'er.
When Venus had the golden apple gained,
And the just judge fair Helen had obtained;
When she with triumph was at Troy received,
The Trojans joyful, while the Grecians grieved;
They vowed revenge of violated laws,
And Greece was arming in the cuckold's cause:
Achilles, by his mother warned from war,
Disguised his sex, and lurked among the fair.
What means Æacides to spin and sow?
With spear and sword in field thy valour show;
And, leaving this, the nobler Pallas know.
Why dost thou in that hand the distaff wield,
Which is more worthy to sustain the shield?

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Or with that other draw the woolly twine,
The same the fates for Hector's thread assign?
Brandish thy falchion in thy powerful hand,
Which can alone the ponderous lance command.
In the same room by chance the royal maid
Was lodged, and, by his seeming sex betrayed,
Close to her side the youthful hero laid.
I know not how his courtship he began;
But, to her cost, she found it was a man.
'Tis thought she struggled; but withal 'tis thought,
Her wish was to be conquered when she fought.
For when disclosed, and hastening to the field,
He laid his distaff down, and took the shield;
With tears her humble suit she did prefer,
And thought to stay the grateful* ravisher.
She sighs, she sobs, she begs him not to part;
And now 'tis nature, what before was art.
She strives by force her lover to detain,
And wishes to be ravished once again.
This is the sex; they will not first begin,
But, when compelled, are pleased to suffer sin.
Is there, who thinks that women first should woo?
Lay by thy self-conceit, thou foolish beau!
Begin, and save their modesty the shame;
'Tis well for thee, if they receive thy flame.
'Tis decent for a man to speak his mind;
They but expect the occasion to be kind.
Ask, that thou may'st enjoy; she waits for this;
And on thy first advance depends thy bliss:
Even Jove himself was forced to sue for love;
None of the nymphs did first solicit Jove.
But if you find your prayers increase her pride,
Strike sail awhile, and wait another tide.

* "Grateful" is here used for "pleasing."

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They fly when we pursue; but make delay,
And, when they see you slacken, they will stay.
Sometimes it profits to conceal your end;
Name not yourself her lover, but her friend.
How many skittish girls have thus been caught!
He proved a lover, who a friend was thought.
Sailors by sun and wind are swarthy made;
A tanned complexion best becomes their trade:
'Tis a disgrace to ploughmen to be fair;
Bluff cheeks they have, and weather-beaten hair:
The ambitious youth, who seeks an olive crown,
Is sunburnt with his daily toil, and brown;
But if the lover hopes to be in grace,
Wan be his looks, and meagre be his face.
That colour from the fair compassion draws;
She thinks you sick, and thinks herself the cause.
Orion wandered in the woods for love;
His paleness did the nymphs to pity move;
His ghastly visage argued hidden love.
Nor fail a nightcap, in full health, to wear;
Neglect thy dress, and discompose thy hair.
All things are decent, that in love avail;
Read long by night, and study to be pale;
Forsake your food, refuse your needful rest,
Be miserable, that you may be blest.
Shall I complain, or shall I warn you most?
Faith, truth, and friendship in the world are lost;
A little and an empty name they boast.
Trust not thy friend, much less thy mistress praise;
If he believe, thou may'st a rival raise.
'Tis true, Patroclus, by no lust misled,
Sought not to stain his dear companion's bed;
Nor Pylades Hermione embraced;
Even Phædra to Pirithous still was chaste.

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But hope not thou, in this vile age, to find
Those rare examples of a faithful mind;
The sea shall sooner with sweet honey flow,
Or from the furzes pears and apples grow.
We sin with gust, we love by fraud to gain,
And find a pleasure in our fellow's pain.
From rival foes you may the fair defend;
But, would you ward the blow, beware your friend:
Beware your brother, and your next of kin;
But from your bosom friend your care begin.
Here I had ended, but experience finds,
That sundry women are of sundry minds,
With various crotchets filled, and hard to please;
They therefore must be caught by various ways.
All things are not produced in any soil;
This ground for wine is proper, that for oil.
So 'tis in men, but more in womankind;
Different in face, in manners, and in mind;
But wise men shift their sails with every wind.
As changeful Proteus varied oft his shape,
And did in sundry forms and figures 'scape;
A running stream, a standing tree became,
A roaring lion, or a bleating lamb.
Some fish with harpoons, some with darts are struck,
Some drawn with nets, some hang upon the hook;
So turn thyself; and, imitating them,
Try several tricks, and change thy stratagem.
One rule will not for different ages hold;
The jades grow cunning, as they grow more old.
Then talk not bawdy to the bashful maid;
Broad words will make her innocence afraid:

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Nor to an ignorant girl of learning speak;
She thinks you conjure, when you talk in Greek.
And hence 'tis often seen, the simple shun
The learned, and into vile embraces run.
Part of my task is done, and part to do;
But here 'tis time to rest myself and you.

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FROM

OVID'S AMOURS.

BOOK I. ELEG. 1.

For mighty wars I thought to tune my lute,
And make my measures to my subject suit.
Six feet for every verse the muse designed;
But Cupid, laughing, when he saw my mind,
From every second verse a foot purloined.
Who gave thee, boy, this arbitrary sway,
On subjects, not thy own, commands to lay,
Who Phœbus only and his laws obey?
'Tis more absurd than if the Queen of Love
Should in Minerva's arms to battle move;
Or manly Pallas from that queen should take
Her torch, and o'er the dying lover shake:
In fields as well may Cynthia sow the corn,
Or Ceres wind in woods the bugle-horn:
As well may Phœbus quit the trembling string
For sword and shield; and Mars may learn to sing.
Already thy dominions are too large;
Be not ambitious of a foreign charge.
If thou wilt reign o'er all, and everywhere,
The God of Music for his harp may fear,

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Thus, when with soaring wings I seek renown;
Thou pluck'st my pinions, and I flutter down.
Could I on such mean thoughts my Muse employ,
I want a mistress, or a blooming boy.
Thus I complained; his bow the stripling bent,
And chose an arrow fit for his intent.
The shaft his purpose fatally pursues;—
"Now, poet, there 's a subject for thy Muse!"
He said. Too well, alas! he knows his trade;
For in my breast a mortal wound he made.
Far hence, ye proud hexameters, remove,
My verse is paced and trammelled into love.
With myrtle wreaths my thoughtful brows inclose,
While in unequal* verse I sing my woes.

* [Elegiacs.—Ed.]

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FROM

OVID'S AMOURS.

BOOK I. ELEG. 4.

To his Mistress, whose husband is invited to a feast with them. The Poet instructs her how to behave herself in his company.

YOUR husband will be with us at the treat;
May that be the last supper he shall eat!
And am poor I a guest invited there,
Only to see, while he may touch the fair?
To see you kiss and hug your nauseous lord,
While his lewd hand descends below the board?
Now wonder not that Hippodamia's charms,
At such a sight, the Centaurs urged to arms;
That in a rage they threw their cups aside,
Assailed the bridegroom, and would force the bride.
I am not half a horse, (I would I were!)
Yet hardly can from you my hands forbear.
Take then my counsel; which, observed, may be
Of some importance both to you and me.
Be sure to come before your man be there;
There 's nothing can be done; but come, howe'er.

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Sit next him, (that belongs to decency,)
But tread upon my foot in passing by;
Read in my looks what silently they speak,
And slily, with your eyes, your answer make.
My lifted eye-brow shall declare my pain;
My right hand to his fellow shall complain,
And on the back a letter shall design,
Besides a note that shall be writ in wine.
Whene'er you think upon our last embrace,
With your fore-finger gently touch your face;
If any word of mine offend my dear,
Pull, with your hand, the velvet of your ear;
If you are pleased with what I do or say,
Handle your rings, or with your fingers play;
As suppliants use at altars, hold the board,
Whene'er you wish the devil may take your lord.
When he fills for you, never touch the cup,
But bid the officious cuckold drink it up.
The waiter on those services employ;
Drink you, and I will snatch it from the boy,
Watching the part where your sweet mouth hath been,
And thence with eager lips will suck it in.
If he, with clownish manners, thinks it fit
To taste, and offer you the nasty bit,
Reject his greasy kindness, and restore
The unsavoury morsel he had chewed before.
Nor let his arms embrace your neck, nor rest
Your tender cheek upon his hairy breast;
Let not his hand within your bosom stray,
And rudely with your pretty bubbies play;
But, above all, let him no kiss receive!
That's an offence I never can forgive.
Do not, O do not that sweet mouth resign,
Lest I rise up in arms and cry, "'Tis mine."
I shall thrust in betwixt, and, void of fear,
The manifest adulterer will appear.

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These things are plain to sight; but more I doubt
What you conceal beneath your petticoat.
Take not his leg between your tender thighs,
Nor, with your hand, provoke my foe to rise.
How many love inventions I deplore,
Which I myself have practised all before!
How oft have I been forced the robe to lift
In company; to make a homely shift
For a bare bout, ill huddled o'er in haste,
While o'er my side the fair her mantle cast!
You to your husband shall not be so kind;
But, lest you should, your mantle leave behind.
Encourage him to tope; but kiss him not,
Nor mix one drop of water in his pot.
If he be fuddled well, and snores apace,
Then we may take advice from time and place.
When all depart, when compliments are loud,
Be sure to mix among the thickest crowd;
There I will be, and there we cannot miss,
Perhaps to grubble, or at least to kiss.
Alas! what length of labour I employ,
Just to secure a short and transient joy!
For night must part us; and when night is come,
Tucked underneath his arm he leads you home.
He locks you in; I follow to the door,
His fortune envy, and my own deplore.
He kisses you, he more than kisses too;
The outrageous cuckold thinks it all his due.
But add not to his joy by your consent,
And let it not be given, but only lent.
Return no kiss, nor move in any sort;
Make it a dull and a malignant sport.
Had I my wish, he should no pleasure take,
But slubber o'er your business for my sake;
And whate'er fortune shall this night befall,
Coax me to-morrow, by forswearing all.

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PREFACE

ON

TRANSLATION,

PREFIXED TO

DRYDEN'S SECOND MISCELLANY,

PUBLISHED IN 1685.*

FOR this last half year I have been troubled with the disease (as I may call it) of translation. The cold prose fits of it, which are always the most tedious with me, were spent in the *History of the League*:† the hot, which succeeded them, in this volume of Verse Miscellanies. The truth is, I fancied to myself a kind of ease in the change of the paroxysm; never suspecting but that the humour would have wasted itself in two or three pastorals of Theocritus, and as many odes of Horace. But finding, or at least thinking I found, something that was more pleasing in

* [The *First Miscellany* had no Preface.—ED.]

† Maimbourg's *History of the League*, translated by our author at the command of Charles II.

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them than my ordinary productions, I encouraged myself to renew my old acquaintance with Lucretius and Virgil; and immediately fixed upon some parts of them, which had most affected me in the reading. These were my natural impulses for the undertaking. But there was an accidental motive which was full as forcible, and God forgive him who was the occasion of it. It was my Lord Roscommon's *Essay on Translated Verse;* * which made me uneasy till I tried whether or no I was capable of following his rules, and of reducing the speculation into practice. For, many a fair precept in poetry is, like a seeming demonstration in the mathematics, very specious in the diagram, but failing in the mechanic operation. I think I have generally observed his instructions; I am sure my reason is sufficiently convinced both of their truth and usefulness; which, in other words, is to confess no less a vanity, than to pretend that I have, at least in some places, made examples to his rules. Yet, withal, I must acknowledge, that I have many times exceeded my commission; for I have both added and omitted, and even sometimes very boldly made such expositions of my authors, as no Dutch commentator will forgive me. Perhaps, in such particular passages, I have thought that I discovered some beauty yet undiscovered by those pedants, which none but a poet could have found. Where I have taken away some of their expressions, and cut them shorter, it may possibly be on this consideration, that what was beautiful in the Greek or Latin, would not appear so shining in the English: and where I have enlarged them, I desire the

* First published in 1680.

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false critics would not always think, that those thoughts are wholly mine, but that either they are secretly in the poet, or may be fairly deduced from him; or at least, if both those considerations should fail, that my own is of a piece with his, and that if he were living, and an Englishman, they are such as he would probably have written.

For, after all, a translator is to make his author appear as charming as possibly he can, provided he maintains his character, and makes him not unlike himself. Translation is a kind of drawing after the life; where every one will acknowledge there is a double sort of likeness, a good one and a bad. It is one thing to draw the outlines true, the features like, the proportions exact, the colouring itself perhaps tolerable; and another thing to make all these graceful, by the posture, the shadowings, and, chiefly, by the spirit which animates the whole. I cannot, without some indignation, look on an ill copy of an excellent original; much less can I behold with patience Virgil, Homer, and some others, whose beauties I have been endeavouring all my life to imitate, so abused, as I may say, to their faces, by a botching interpreter. What English readers, unacquainted with Greek or Latin, will believe me, or any other man, when we commend those authors, and confess we derive all that is pardonable in us from their fountains, if they take those to be the same poets whom our Oglebys have translated? But I dare assure them, that a good poet is no more like himself in a dull translation, than his carcass would be to his living body. There are many, who understand Greek and Latin, and yet are ignorant of their mother-tongue. The proprieties and delicacies of the English are known to few; it is impossible

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even for a good wit to understand and practise them, without the help of a liberal education, long reading, and digesting of those few good authors we have amongst us, the knowledge of men and manners, the freedom of habitudes and conversation with the best company of both sexes; and, in short, without wearing off the rust which he contracted while he was laying in a stock of learning. Thus difficult it is to understand the purity of English, and critically to discern not only good writers from bad, and a proper style from a corrupt, but also to distinguish that which is pure in a good author, from that which is vicious and corrupt in him. And for want of all these requisites, or the greatest part of them, most of our ingenious young men take up some cried-up English poet for their model, adore him, and imitate him, as they think, without knowing wherein he is defective, where he is boyish and trifling, wherein either his thoughts are improper to his subject, or his expressions unworthy of his thoughts, or the turn of both is unharmonious. Thus it appears necessary, that a man should be a nice critic in his mother-tongue before he attempts to translate a foreign language. Neither is it sufficient, that he be able to judge of words and style; but he must be a master of them too; he must perfectly understand his author's tongue, and absolutely command his own. So that, to be a thorough translator, he must be a thorough poet. Neither is it enough to give his author's sense in good English, in poetical expressions, and in musical numbers; for, though all these are exceeding difficult to perform, there yet remains an harder task; and it is a secret of which few translators have sufficiently thought. I have already hinted

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a word or two concerning it; that is, the maintaining the character of an author, which distinguishes him from all others, and makes him appear that individual poet whom you would interpret. For example, not only the thoughts, but the style and versification, of Virgil and Ovid are very different: yet I see, even in our best poets, who have translated some parts of them, that they have confounded their several talents; and, by endeavouring only at the sweetness and harmony of numbers, have made them both so much alike, that, if I did not know the originals, I should never be able to judge by the copies which was Virgil, and which was Ovid. It was objected against a late noble painter,* that he drew many graceful pictures, but few of them were like. And this happened to him, because he always studied himself more than those who sat to him. In such translators I can easily distinguish the hand which performed the work, but I cannot distinguish their poet from another. Suppose two authors are equally sweet, yet there is as great distinction to be made in sweetness, as in that of sugar and that of honey. I can make the difference more plain, by giving you (if it be worth knowing) my own method of proceeding, in my translations out of four several poets in this volume; Virgil, Theocritus, Lucretius, and Horace. In each of these, before I undertook them, I considered

* Sir Peter Lely, by birth a Dutchman, came to England in 1641, and died in 1680. There is a remarkable similarity between his female portraits, which seems to have arisen from the circumstance mentioned by Dryden, of his bringing all his subjects as near as possible to his own idea of the beautiful. Pope's lines in his praise are too well known to be quoted.

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the genius and distinguishing character of my author. I looked on Virgil as a succinct, and grave majestic writer; one who weighed, not only every thought, but every word and syllable; who was still aiming to crowd his sense into as narrow a compass as possibly he could; for which reason he is so very figurative, that he requires (I may almost say) a grammar apart to construe him. His verse is everywhere sounding the very thing in your ears, whose sense it bears; yet the numbers are perpetually varied, to increase the delight of the reader; so that the same sounds are never repeated twice together. On the contrary, Ovid and Claudian, though they write in styles differing from each other, yet have each of them but one sort of music in their verses. All the versification and little variety of Claudian is included within the compass of four or five lines, and then he begins again in the same tenor; perpetually closing his sense at the end of a verse, and that verse commonly which they call golden, or two substantives and two adjectives, with a verb betwixt them to keep the peace. Ovid, with all his sweetness, has as little variety of numbers and sound as he: he is always, as it were, upon the hand-gallop, and his verse runs upon carpet-ground. He avoids, like the other, all synalœphas, or cutting off one vowel when it comes before another in the following word; so that, minding only smoothness, he wants both variety and majesty. —But to return to Virgil: though he is smooth where smoothness is required, yet he is so far from affecting it, that he seems rather to disdain it; frequently makes use of synalœphas, and concludes his sense in the middle of his verse. He is everywhere above conceits of epigram-

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matic wit, and gross hyperboles; he maintains majesty in the midst of plainness; he shines, but glares not; and is stately without ambition, which is the vice of Lucan. I drew my definition of poetical wit from my particular consideration of him: for propriety of thoughts and words are only to be found in him; and where they are proper they will be delightful. Pleasure follows of necessity, as the effect does the cause; and therefore is not to be put into the definition. This exact propriety of Virgil I particularly regarded as a great part of his character; but must confess, to my shame, that I have not been able to translate any part of him so well, as to make him appear wholly like himself: for, where the original is close, no version can reach it in the same compass. Hannibal Caro's,* in the Italian, is the nearest, the most poetical, and the most sonorous of any translation of the Æneids; yet, though he takes the advantage of blank verse, he commonly allows two lines for one of Virgil, and does not always hit his sense. Tasso tells us, in his letters, that Sperone Speroni, a great Italian wit, who was his contemporary, observed of Virgil and Tully, that the Latin orator endeavoured to imitate the copiousness of Homer, the Greek poet; and that the Latin poet made it his business to reach the conciseness of Demosthenes, the Greek orator. Virgil therefore, being so very sparing of his words, and leaving so much to be imagined by the reader, can never be translated as he ought, in any modern tongue. To make him copious, is to alter his character; and to translate him line for line, is impossible;

* Annibale Caro died at Rome, 1566.

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because the Latin is naturally a more succinct language than either the Italian, Spanish, French, or even than the English, which, by reason of its monosyllables, is far the most compendious of them. Virgil is much the closest of any Roman poet, and the Latin hexameter has more feet than the English heroic.

Besides all this, an author has the choice of his own thoughts and words, which a translator has not; he is confined by the sense of the inventor to those expressions which are the nearest to it: so that Virgil, studying brevity, and having the command of his own language, could bring those words into a narrow compass, which a translator cannot render without circumlocutions. In short, they, who have called him the torture of grammarians, might also have called him the plague of translators; for he seems to have studied not to be translated. I own that, endeavouring to turn his "Nisus and Euryalus" as close as I was able, I have performed that episode too literally; that, giving more scope to "Mezentius and Lausus," that version, which has more of the majesty of Virgil, has less of his conciseness; and all that I can promise for myself, is only, that I have done both better than Ogleby, and perhaps as well as Caro; so that, methinks, I come like a malefactor, to make a speech upon the gallows, and to warn all other poets, by my sad example, from the sacrilege of translating Virgil. Yet, by considering him so carefully as I did before my attempt, I have made some faint resemblance of him; and, had I taken more time, might possibly have succeeded better; but never so well as to have satisfied myself.

He who excels all other poets in his own language, were it possible to do him right, must

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appear above them in our tongue, which, as my Lord Roscommon justly observes, approaches nearest to the Roman in its majesty; nearest indeed, but with a vast interval betwixt them. There is an inimitable grace in Virgil's words, and in them principally consists that beauty, which gives so inexpressible a pleasure to him who best understands their force. This diction of his (I must once again say) is never to be copied; and, since it cannot, he will appear but lame in the best translation. The turns of his verse, his breakings, his propriety, his numbers, and his gravity, I have as far imitated, as the poverty of our language, and the hastiness of my performance, would allow. I may seem sometimes to have varied from his sense; but I think the greatest variations may be fairly deduced from him; and where I leave his commentators, it may be I understand him better: at least I writ without consulting them in many places. But two particular lines in "Mezentius and Lausus," I cannot so easily excuse. They are indeed remotely allied to Virgil's sense; but they are too like the trifling tenderness of Ovid, and were printed before I had considered them enough to alter them. The first of them I have forgotten, and cannot easily retrieve, because the copy is at the press. The second is this:—

When Lausus died, I was already slain.

This appears pretty enough at first sight; but I am convinced, for many reasons, that the expression is too bold; that Virgil would not have said it, though Ovid would. The reader may pardon it, if he please, for the freeness of the confession; and instead of that, and the former, admit these

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two lines, which are more according to the author—

> Nor ask I life, nor fought with that design;
> As I had used my fortune, use thou thine.

Having with much ado got clear of Virgil, I have, in the next place, to consider the genius of Lucretius, whom I have translated more happily in those parts of him which I undertook. If he was not of the best age of Roman poetry, he was at least of that which preceded it;* and he himself refined it to that degree of perfection, both in the language and the thoughts, that he left an easy task to Virgil; who, as he succeeded him in time, so he copied his excellences; for the method of the *Georgics* is plainly derived from him. Lucretius had chosen a subject naturally crabbed; he therefore adorned it with poetical descriptions, and precepts of morality, in the beginning and ending of his books, which you see Virgil has imitated with great success in those four books, which, in my opinion, are more perfect in their kind than even his divine Æneids. The turn of his verse he has likewise followed in those places which Lucretius has most laboured, and some of his very lines he has transplanted into his own works, without much variation. If I am not mistaken, the distinguishing character of Lucretius (I mean of his soul and genius) is a certain kind of noble pride, and positive assertion of his opinions. He is everywhere confident of his own reason, and assuming an absolute command, not only over his vulgar reader, but even his patron Memmius. For he

* He died in the year of Rome 699, before the commencement of the Augustan age.

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is always bidding him attend, as if he had the rod over him; and using a magisterial authority, while he instructs him. From his time to ours, I know none so like him, as our poet and philosopher of Malmesbury.* This is that perpetual dictatorship, which is exercised by Lucretius; who, though often in the wrong, yet seems to deal *bonâ fide* with his reader, and tells him nothing but what he thinks; in which plain sincerity, I believe, he differs from our Hobbes, who could not but be convinced, or at least doubt of some eternal truths, which he had opposed. But for Lucretius, he seems to disdain all manner of replies, and is so confident of his cause, that he is beforehand with his antagonists; urging for them whatever he imagined they could say, and leaving them, as he supposes, without an objection for the future: all this, too, with so much scorn and indignation, as if he were assured of the triumph, before he entered into the lists. From this sublime and daring genius of his, it must of necessity come to pass, that his thoughts must be masculine, full of argumentation, and that sufficiently warm. From the same fiery temper proceeds the loftiness of his expressions, and the perpetual torrent of his verse, where the barrenness of his subject does not too much constrain the quickness of his fancy. For there is no doubt to be made, but that he could have been everywhere as poetical, as he is in his descriptions, and in the moral part of his philosophy, if he had not aimed more to instruct, in his system of nature, than to delight. But he was bent upon making Memmius a materialist, and teaching him to defy an invisible power: in

* The celebrated Hobbes, who died in 1679.

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short, he was so much an atheist, that he forgot sometimes to be a poet. These are the considerations, which I had of that author, before I attempted to translate some parts of him. And accordingly I laid by my natural diffidence and scepticism for a while, to take up that dogmatical way of his, which, as I said, is so much his character, as to make him that individual poet. As for his opinions concerning the mortality of the soul, they are so absurd, that I cannot, if I would, believe them. I think a future state demonstrable even by natural arguments; at least to take away rewards and punishments is only a pleasing prospect to a man, who resolves beforehand not to live morally. But, on the other side, the thought of being nothing after death is a burthen insupportable to a virtuous man, even though a heathen. We naturally aim at happiness, and cannot bear to have it confined to the shortness of our present being; especially when we consider, that virtue is generally unhappy in this world, and vice fortunate: so that it is hope of futurity alone, that makes this life tolerable, in expectation of a better. Who would not commit all the excesses, to which he is prompted by his natural inclinations, if he may do them with security while he is alive, and be incapable of punishment after he is dead? If he be cunning and secret enough to avoid the laws, there is no band of morality to restrain him: for fame and reputation are weak ties; many men have not the least sense of them. Powerful men are only awed by them, as they conduce to their interest, and that not always, when a passion is predominant; and no man will be contained within the bounds of duty, when he may safely transgress them. These are my thoughts ab-

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stractedly, and without entering into the notions of our Christian faith, which is the proper business of divines.

But there are other arguments in this poem (which I have turned into English) not belonging to the mortality of the soul, which are strong enough to a reasonable man, to make him less in love with life, and consequently in less apprehensions of death. Such as are the natural satiety proceeding from a perpetual enjoyment of the same things; the inconveniences of old age, which make him incapable of corporeal pleasures; the decay of understanding and memory, which render him contemptible, and useless to others. These, and many other reasons, so pathetically urged, so beautifully expressed, so adorned with examples, and so admirably raised by the *prosopopœia* of Nature, who is brought in speaking to her children with so much authority and vigour, deserve the pains I have taken with them, which I hope have not been unsuccessful, or unworthy of my author: at least I must take the liberty to own that I was pleased with my own endeavours, which but rarely happens to me; and that I am not dissatisfied upon the review of anything I have done in this author.

It is true, there is something, and that of some moment, to be objected against my Englishing the "Nature of Love," from the fourth book of Lucretius; and I can less easily answer why I translated it, than why I thus translated it. The objection arises from the obscenity of the subject; which is aggravated by the too lively and alluring delicacy of the verses. In the first place, without the least formality of an excuse, I own it pleased me; and let my enemies make

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the worst they can of this confession. I am not yet so secure from that passion, but that I want my author's antidotes against it. He has given the truest and most philosophical account, both of the disease and remedy, which I ever found in any author; for which reasons I translated him. But it will be asked, why I turned him into this luscious English, for I will not give it a worse word. Instead of an answer, I would ask again of my supercilious adversaries, whether I am not bound, when I translate an author, to do him all the right I can, and to translate him to the best advantage? If, to mince his meaning, which I am satisfied was honest and instructive, I had either omitted some part of what he said, or taken from the strength of his expression, I certainly had wronged him; and that freeness of thought and words being thus cashiered in my hands, he had no longer been Lucretius. If nothing of this kind be to be read, physicians must not study nature, anatomies must not be seen, and somewhat I could say of particular passages in books, which, to avoid profaneness, I do not name. But the intention qualifies the act; and both mine and my author's were to instruct, as well as please. It is most certain, that bare-faced bawdry is the poorest pretence to wit imaginable. If I should say otherwise, I should have two great authorities against me: the one is the "Essay on Poetry," which I publicly valued before I knew the author of it, and with the commendation of which my Lord Roscommon so happily begins his "Essay on Translated Verse;" the other is no less than our admired Cowley, who says the same thing in other words; for, in his "Ode concerning Wit," he writes thus of it:—

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Much less can that have any place,
At which a virgin hides her face;
Such dross the fire must purge away; 'tis just
The author blush, there, where the reader must.

Here indeed Mr. Cowley goes further than the Essay: for he asserts plainly, that obscenity has no place in wit; the other only says, it is a poor pretence to it, or an ill sort of wit, which has nothing more to support it than barefaced ribaldry; which is both unmannerly in itself, and fulsome to the reader. But neither of these will reach my case: for, in the first place, I am only the translator, not the inventor; so that the heaviest part of the censure falls upon Lucretius, before it reaches me: in the next place, neither he nor I have used the grossest words, but the cleanliest metaphors we could find, to palliate the broadness of the meaning; and, to conclude, have carried the poetical part no further, than the philosophical exacted.*

There is one mistake of mine, which I will not lay to the printer's charge, who has enough to answer for in false pointings; it is in the word, *viper;* I would have the verse run thus—

The scorpion, love, must on the wound be bruised.†

There are a sort of blundering, half-witted people who make a great deal of noise about a

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* I wish our author had attended to his noble friend Roscommon's recommendation:—

Immodest words admit of no defence,
For want of decency is want of sense;
What moderate fop would range the Park, or stews,
Who among troops of faultless nymphs might choose?

† This error, however, went through the subsequent editions.

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verbal slip; though Horace would instruct them better in true criticism—

> ——— *non ego paucis*
> *Offendar maculis, quas aut incuria fudit,*
> *Aut humana parùm cavit natura.*

True judgment in poetry, like that in painting, takes a view of the whole together, whether it be good or not; and where the beauties are more than the faults, concludes for the poet against the little judge. It is a sign that malice is hard driven, when it is forced to lay hold on a word or syllable: to arraign a man is one thing, and to cavil at him is another. In the midst of an ill-natured generation of scribblers, there is always justice enough left in mankind to protect good writers: and they too are obliged, both by humanity and interest, to espouse each other's cause, against false critics, who are the common enemies. This last consideration puts me in mind of what I owe to the ingenious and learned translator of Lucretius.* I have not here designed to rob him of any part of that commenda-

* Thomas Creech, a particular friend of our author. He was born in 1659, and in June 1700 committed suicide; for which rash action no adequate cause has been assigned. Besides the translation of Lucretius, which is his principal work, he executed an indifferent version of Horace, and translated parts of Theocritus, Ovid, Juvenal, Virgil, etc. In his translation of Lucretius he omitted the indelicate part of the Fourth Book, a deficiency which Dryden thought fit to supply, for which he has above assigned some very inadequate reasons. Creech's Lucretius first appeared at Oxford, in 8vo, 1682, and was reprinted in the year following. The annotations, to which our author alludes a little lower, were originally attached to a Latin edition of Lucretius, superintended by Creech, and afterwards transferred to his English version. They display great learning, and an intimate acquaintance with the Epicurean philosophy.

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tion which he has so justly acquired by the whole author, whose fragments only fall to my portion. What I have now performed is no more than I intended above twenty years ago. The ways of our translation are very different. He follows him more closely than I have done, which became an interpreter of the whole poem: I take more liberty, because it best suited with my design, which was, to make him as pleasing as I could. He had been too voluminous, had he used my method in so long a work; and I had certainly taken his, had I made it my business to translate the whole. The preference, then, is justly his; and I join with Mr. Evelyn in the confession of it, with this additional advantage to him, that his reputation is already established in this poet, mine is to make its fortune in the world. If I have been anywhere obscure, in following our common author, or if Lucretius himself is to be condemned, I refer myself to his excellent annotations, which I have often read, and always with some new pleasure.

My Preface begins already to swell upon me, and looks as if I were afraid of my reader, by so tedious a bespeaking of him; and yet I have Horace and Theocritus upon my hands; but the Greek gentleman shall quickly be dispatched, because I have more business with the Roman.

That which distinguishes Theocritus from all other poets, both Greek and Latin, and which raises him even above Virgil in his *Eclogues*, is the inimitable tenderness of his passions, and the natural expression of them in words so becoming of a pastoral. A simplicity shines through all he writes. He shows his art and learning, by disguising both. His shepherds never rise above their country education in their complaints of

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love. There is the same difference betwixt him and Virgil, as there is betwixt Tasso's *Aminta* and the *Pastor Fido* of Guarini. Virgil's shepherds are too well read in the philosophy of Epicurus and of Plato, and Guarini's seem to have been bred in courts; but Theocritus and Tasso have taken theirs from cottages and plains. It was said of Tasso, in relation to his similitudes, *mai esce del bosco*, that he never departed from the woods; that is, all his comparisons were taken from the country. The same may be said of our Theocritus. He is softer than Ovid; he touches the passions more delicately, and performs all this out of his own fund, without diving into the arts and sciences for a supply. Even his Doric dialect has an incomparable sweetness in its clownishness, like a fair shepherdess in her country russet, talking in a Yorkshire tone. This was impossible for Virgil to imitate; because the severity of the Roman language denied him that advantage. Spenser has endeavoured it in his *Shepherd's Calendar;* but neither will it succeed in English; for which reason I forbore to attempt it. For Theocritus writ to Sicilians, who spoke that dialect; and I direct this part of my translations to our ladies, who neither understand, nor will take pleasure in such homely expressions. I proceed to Horace.

Take him in parts, and he is chiefly to be considered in his three different talents, as he was a critic, a satirist, and a writer of odes. His morals are uniform, and run through all of them; for, let his Dutch commentators say what they will, his philosophy was Epicurean; and he made use of gods and providence only to serve a turn in poetry. But since neither his Criticisms, which are the most instructive of any that

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are written in this art, nor his Satires, which are incomparably beyond Juvenal's, (if to laugh and rally is to be preferred to railing and declaiming,) are no* part of my present undertaking, I confine myself wholly to his Odes. These are also of several sorts: some of them are panegyrical, others moral, the rest jovial, or (if I may so call them) Bacchanalian. As difficult as he makes it, and as indeed it is, to imitate Pindar, yet, in his most elevated flights, and in the sudden changes of his subject with almost imperceptible connections, that Theban poet is his master. But Horace is of the more bounded fancy, and confines himself strictly to one sort of verse, or stanza, in every Ode. That which will distinguish his style from all other poets, is the elegance of his words, and the numerousness of his verse. There is nothing so delicately turned in all the Roman language. There appears in every part of his diction, or (to speak English) in all his expressions, a kind of noble and bold purity. His words are chosen with as much exactness as Virgil's; but there seems to be a greater spirit in them. There is a secret happiness attends his choice, which in Petronius is called *curiosa felicitas*, and which I suppose he had from the *feliciter audere* of Horace himself. But the most distinguishing part of all his character seems to me to be his briskness, his jollity, and his good humour; and those I have chiefly endeavoured to copy. His other excellences, I confess, are above my imitation. One Ode, which infinitely pleased me in the reading, I have attempted to translate in Pindaric verse: it is that, which is inscribed to the present Earl

* [Dryden has put a negative too many.—Ed.]

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of Rochester, to whom I have particular obligations, which this small testimony of my gratitude can never pay.* It is his darling in the Latin, and I have taken some pains to make it my masterpiece in English: for which reason I took this kind of verse, which allows more latitude than any other. Every one knows it was introduced into our language, in this age, by the happy genius of Mr. Cowley. The seeming easiness of it has made it spread; but it has not been considered enough, to be so well cultivated. It languishes in almost every hand but his, and some very few, whom (to keep the rest in countenance) I do not name. He, indeed, has brought it as near perfection as was possible in so short a time. But, if I may be allowed to speak my mind modestly, and without injury to his sacred ashes, somewhat of the purity of English, somewhat of more equal thoughts, somewhat of sweetness in the numbers, in one word, somewhat of a finer turn, and more lyrical verse, is yet wanting. As for the soul of it, which consists in the warmth and vigour of fancy, the masterly figures, and the copiousness of imagination, he has excelled all others in this kind. Yet if the kind itself be capable of more perfection, though rather in the ornamental parts of it than the essential, what rules of morality or respect have I broken, in naming the defects, that they may hereafter be amended? Imitation is a nice point, and there are few poets who deserve to be models in all they write. Milton's

* Our author, in the Dedication to *Cleomenes* compliments Lord Rochester on his power of critically understanding the beauties of Horace, and upon his particular affection for this particular Ode. See vol. viii. p. 215.

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Paradise Lost is admirable; but am I therefore bound to maintain, that there are no flats amongst his elevations, when it is evident he creeps along sometimes for above an hundred lines together? Cannot I admire the height of his invention, and the strength of his expression, without defending his antiquated words, and the perpetual harshness of their sound? It is as much commendation as a man can bear, to own him excellent; all beyond it is idolatry. Since Pindar was the prince of lyric poets, let me have leave to say, that, in imitating him, our numbers should, for the most part, be lyrical: for variety, or rather where the majesty of thought requires it, they may be stretched to the English heroic of five feet, and to the French Alexandrine of six. But the ear must preside, and direct the judgment to the choice of numbers. Without the nicety of this, the harmony of Pindaric verse can never be complete; the cadency of one line must be a rule to that of the next; and the sound of the former must slide gently into that which follows, without leaping from one extreme into another. It must be done like the shadowings of a picture, which fall by degrees into a darker colour. I shall be glad, if I have so explained myself as to be understood; but if I have not, *quod nequeo dicere, et sentio tantum*,* must be my excuse.

There remains much more to be said on this subject; but, to avoid envy, I will be silent. What I have said is the general opinion of the best judges, and in a manner has been forced

* Mr. Malone has observed, that this quotation, as well as that which follows, is inaccurate; the words of Juvenal are, "nequeo *monstrare*, et sentio tantum."

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from me, by seeing a noble sort of poetry so happily restored by one man, and so grossly copied by almost all the rest. A musical ear, and a great genius, if another Mr. Cowley could arise in another age, may bring it to perfection. In the meantime,

——— fungar vice cotis, acutum
Reddere quæ ferrum valet, expers ipsa secandi.

I hope it will not be expected from me, that I should say anything of my fellow undertakers in this Miscellany. Some of them are too nearly related to me, to be commended without suspicion of partiality;* others I am sure need it not; and the rest I have not perused.

To conclude, I am sensible that I have written this too hastily and too loosely; I fear I have been tedious, and, which is worse, it comes out from the first draught, and uncorrected. This I grant is no excuse; for it may be reasonably urged, why did he not write with more leisure, or if he had it not, (which was certainly my case,) why did he attempt to write on so nice a subject? The objection is unanswerable; but, in part of recompense, let me assure the reader, that, in hasty productions, he is sure to meet with an author's present sense, which cooler thoughts would possibly have disguised. There is undoubtedly more of spirit, though not of judgment, in these uncorrect essays; and consequently, though my hazard be the greater, yet the reader's pleasure is not the less.

JOHN DRYDEN.

* Dryden's son was amongst the contributors.

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TRANSLATIONS

FROM

THEOCRITUS.

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AMARYLLIS;

OR, THE

THIRD IDYLLIUM OF THEOCRITUS,

PARAPHRASED.*

To Amaryllis love compels my way,
My browsing goats upon the mountains stray;
O Tityrus, tend them well, and see them fed
In pastures fresh, and to their watering led;
And 'ware the ridgling† with his budding head.
Ah, beauteous nymph! can you forget your love,
The conscious grottoes, and the shady grove,
Where stretched at ease your tender limbs were laid,
Your nameless beauties nakedly displayed?
Then I was called your darling, your desire,
With kisses such as set my soul on fire:
But you are changed, yet I am still the same;
My heart maintains for both a double flame,
Grieved, but unmoved, and patient of your scorn;
So faithful I, and you so much forsworn!

* This appeared in the *First Miscellany.*

† [A semi-gelding.—Ed.]

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I die, and death will finish all my pain;
Yet, ere I die, behold me once again:
Am I so much deformed, so changed of late?
What partial judges are our love and hate!
Ten wildings have I gathered for my dear;
How ruddy, like your lips, their streaks appear!
Far-off you viewed them with a longing eye
Upon the topmost branch (the tree was high);
Yet nimbly up, from bough to bough, I swerved,*
And for to-morrow have ten more reserved.
Look on me kindly, and some pity show,
Or give me leave at least to look on you.
Some god transform me by his heavenly power,
Even to a bee to buzz within your bower,
The winding ivy-chaplet to invade,
And folded fern, that your fair forehead shade.
Now to my cost the force of love I find,
The heavy hand it bears on humankind.
The milk of tigers was his infant food,
Taught from his tender years the taste of blood;
His brother whelps and he ran wild about the wood.
Ah, nymph, trained up in his tyrannic court,
To make the sufferings of your slaves your sport!
Unheeded ruin! treacherous delight!
O polished hardness, softened to the sight!
Whose radiant eyes your ebon brows adorn,
Like midnight those, and these like break of morn!
Smile once again, revive me with your charms,
And let me die contented in your arms.

* To swerve, as the word is here used, means to draw one's-self up a tree by clinging round it with the legs and arms. It occurs in the old ballad of Sir Andrew Barton, where he sends one of his men aloft:—

Then Gordon swarved the maine-mast tree,
He swarved it with might and main.
Reliques of Ancient Poetry, vol. ii. p. 192.

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I would not ask to live another day,
Might I but sweetly kiss my soul away.
Ah, why am I from empty joys debarred?
For kisses are but empty when compared.
I rave, and in my raging fit shall tear
The garland, which I wove for you to wear,
Of parsley, with a wreath of ivy bound,
And bordered with a rosy edging round.
What pangs I feel, unpitied and unheard!
Since I must die, why is my fate deferred!
I strip my body of my shepherd's frock;
Behold that dreadful downfall of a rock,
Where yon old fisher views the waves from high!
'Tis that convenient leap I mean to try.
You would be pleased to see me plunge to shore,
But better pleased if I should rise no more.
I might have read my fortune long ago,
When, seeking my success in love to know,
I tried the infallible prophetic way,
A poppy-leaf upon my palm to lay.
I struck, and yet no lucky crack did follow;
Yet I struck hard, and yet the leaf lay hollow;
And, which was worse, if any worse could prove,
The withering leaf foreshowed your withering love.
Yet further,—ah, how far a lover dares!
My last recourse I had to sieve and sheers,
And told the witch Agreo my disease:
(Agreo, that in harvest used to lease;*
But, harvest done, to chare-work did aspire;
Meat, drink, and two-pence was her daily hire;)
To work she went, her charms she muttered o'er,
And yet the resty sieve wagged ne'er the more;
I wept for woe, the testy beldame swore,

* ["Lease"="glean."—Ed.]

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And, foaming with her God, foretold my fate,
That I was doomed to love, and you to hate.
A milk-white goat for you I did provide;
Two milk-white kids run frisking by her side,
For which the nut-brown lass, Erithacis,
Full often offered many a savoury kiss.
Hers they shall be, since you refuse the price;
What madman would o'erstand his market twice!
My right eye itches, some good-luck is near,
Perhaps my Amaryllis may appear;
I 'll set up such a note as she shall hear.
What nymph but my melodious voice would move?
She must be flint, if she refuse my love.
Hippomenes, who ran with noble strife
To win his lady, or to lose his life,
(What shift some men will make to get a wife?)
Threw down a golden apple in her way;
For all her haste, she could not choose but stay:
Renown said, "Run;" the glittering bribe cried "Hold;"
The man might have been hanged, but for his gold.
Yet some suppose 'twas love, (some few indeed!)
That stopt the fatal fury of her speed:
She saw, she sighed; her nimble feet refuse
Their wonted speed, and she took pains to lose.
A prophet some, and some a poet cry,*
(No matter which, so neither of them lie,)

* Melampus, the son of Amythaon, was a prophet and physician. Tibullus cites him in the character of an augur—

——compertum est veracibus ut mihi signis,
Queis Amythaonius nequeat certare Melampus.

As a physician, he discovered the use of hellebore—thence called Melampodium.

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From steepy Othrys' top to Pylus drove
His herd, and for his pains enjoyed his love.
If such another wager should be laid,
I 'll find the man, if you can find the maid.
Why name I men, when love extended finds
His power on high, and in celestial minds?
Venus the shepherd's homely habit took,
And managed something else besides the crook;
Nay, when Adonis died, was heard to roar,
And never from her heart forgave the boar.
How blest was fair Endymion with his moon,
Who sleeps on Latmos' top from night to noon!
What Jason from Medea's love possest,
You shall not hear, but know 'tis like the rest.
My aching head can scarce support the pain;
This cursed love will surely turn my brain:
Feel how it shoots, and yet you take no pity;
Nay, then, 'tis time to end my doleful ditty.
A clammy sweat does o'er my temples creep,
My heavy eyes are urged with iron sleep;
I lay me down to gasp my latest breath,
The wolves will get a breakfast by my death;
Yet scarce enough their hunger to supply,
For love has made me carrion ere I die.

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THE EPITHALAMIUM

OF

HELEN AND MENELAUS,

FROM THE

EIGHTEENTH IDYLLIUM OF THEOCRITUS.*

TWELVE Spartan virgins, noble, young, and fair,
With violet wreaths adorned their flowing hair;
And to the pompous palace did resort,
Where Menelaus kept his royal court.
There, hand in hand, a comely choir they led,
To sing a blessing to his nuptial bed,
With curious needles wrought, and painted flowers bespread.
Jove's beauteous daughter now his bride must be,
And Jove himself was less a God than he;
For this their artful hands instruct the lute to sound,
Their feet assist their hands, and justly beat the ground.

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* This and the three [two] following Idylliums were first published in the *Second Miscellany*.

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This was their song:—"Why, happy bridegroom, why,
Ere yet the stars are kindled in the sky,
Ere twilight shades, or evening dews are shed,
Why dost thou steal so soon away to bed?
Has Somnus brushed thy eyelids with his rod,
Or do thy legs refuse to bear their load,
With flowing bowls of a more generous god?
If gentle slumber on thy temples creep,
(But, naughty man, thou dost not mean to sleep,)
Betake thee to thy bed, thou drowsy drone,
Sleep by thyself, and leave thy bride alone:
Go, leave her with her maiden mates to play
At sports more harmless till the break of day;
Give us this evening; thou hast morn and night,
And all the year before thee, for delight.
O happy youth! to thee, among the crowd
Of rival princes, Cupid sneezed aloud;
And every lucky omen sent before,
To meet thee landing on the Spartan shore.
Of all our heroes, thou canst boast alone,
That Jove, whene'er he thunders, calls thee son;
Betwixt two sheets thou shalt enjoy her bare,
With whom no Grecian virgin can compare;
So soft, so sweet, so balmy, and so fair.
A boy, like thee, would make a kingly line;
But oh, a girl like her must be divine.
Her equals we in years, but not in face,
Twelve score viragos of the Spartan race,
While naked to Eurotas' banks we bend,
And there in manly exercise contend,
When she appears, are all eclipsed and lost,
And hide the beauties that we made our boast.
So, when the night and winter disappear,
The purple morning, rising with the year,
Salutes the spring, as her celestial eyes
Adorn the world, and brighten all the skies;

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So beauteous Helen shines among the rest,
Tall, slender, straight, with all the Graces blest.
As pines the mountains, or as fields the corn,
Or as Thessalian steeds the race adorn;
So rosy-coloured Helen is the pride
Of Lacedemon, and of Greece beside.
Like her no nymph can willing osiers bend
In basket-works, which painted streaks commend;
With Pallas in the loom she may contend.
But none, ah! none can animate the lyre,
And the mute strings with vocal souls inspire;
Whether the learned Minerva be her theme,
Or chaste Diana bathing in the stream,
None can record their heavenly praise so well
As Helen, in whose eyes ten thousand Cupids dwell.
O fair, O graceful! yet with maids enrolled,
But whom to-morrow's sun a matron shall behold!
Yet ere to-morrow's sun shall show his head,
The dewy paths of meadows we will tread,
For crowns and chaplets to adorn thy head.
Where all shall weep, and wish for thy return,
As bleating lambs their absent mother mourn.
Our noblest maids shall to thy name bequeath
The boughs of Lotus, formed into a wreath.
This monument, thy maiden beauties due,
High on a plane-tree shall be hung to view;
On the smooth rind the passenger shall see
Thy name engraved, and worship Helen's tree;
Balm, from a silver box distilled around,
Shall all bedew the roots, and scent the sacred ground.
The balm, 'tis true, can aged plants prolong,
But Helen's name will keep it ever young.

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"Hail bride, hail bridegroom, son-in-law to Jove!
With fruitful joys Latona bless your love!
Let Venus furnish you with full desires,
Add vigour to your wills, and fuel to your fires!
Almighty Jove augment your wealthy store,
Give much to you, and to his grandsons more!
From generous loins a generous race will spring,
Each girl, like her, a queen; each boy, like you, a king.
Now sleep, if sleep you can; but while you rest,
Sleep close, with folded arms, and breast to breast.
Rise in the morn; but oh! before you rise,
Forget not to perform your morning sacrifice.
We will be with you ere the crowing cock
Salutes the light, and struts before his feathered flock.
Hymen, O Hymen, to thy triumphs run,
And view the mighty spoils thou hast in battle won!"

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THE DESPAIRING LOVER.

FROM THE

TWENTY-THIRD IDYLLIUM OF THEOCRITUS.

With inauspicious love, a wretched swain
Pursued the fairest nymph of all the plain;
Fairest indeed, but prouder far than fair,
She plunged him hopeless in a deep despair:
Her heavenly form too haughtily she prized,
His person hated, and his gifts despised;
Nor knew the force of Cupid's cruel darts,
Nor feared his awful power on human hearts;
But either from her hopeless lover fled,
Or with disdainful glances shot him dead.
No kiss, no look, to cheer the drooping boy,
No word she spoke, she scorned even to deny;
But, as a hunted panther casts about
Her glaring eyes, and pricks her listening ears to scout;
So she, to shun his toils, her cares employed,
And fiercely in her savage freedom joyed.
Her mouth she writhed, her forehead taught to frown,
Her eyes to sparkle fires to love unknown;

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Her sallow cheeks her envious mind did shew,
And every feature spoke aloud the curstness of a shrew.
Yet could not he his obvious fate escape;
His love still dressed her in a pleasing shape;
And every sullen frown, and bitter scorn,
But fanned the fuel that too fast did burn.
Long time, unequal to his mighty pain,
He strove to curb it, but he strove in vain;
At last his woes broke out, and begged relief
With tears, the dumb petitioners of grief;
With tears so tender, as adorned his love,
And any heart, but only hers, would move.
Trembling before her bolted doors he stood,
And there poured out the unprofitable flood;
Staring his eyes, and haggard was his look;
Then, kissing first the threshold, thus he spoke.
"Ah, nymph, more cruel than of human race!
Thy tigress heart belies thy angel face;
Too well thou show'st thy pedigree from stone,
Thy grandame's was the first by Pyrrha thrown;
Unworthy thou to be so long desired;
But so my love, and so my fate required.
I beg not now (for 'tis in vain) to live;
But take this gift, the last that I can give.
This friendly cord shall soon decide the strife
Betwixt my lingering love and loathsome life:
This moment puts an end to all my pain;
I shall no more despair, nor thou disdain.
Farewell, ungrateful and unkind! I go
Condemned by thee to those sad shades below.
I go the extremest remedy to prove,
To drink oblivion, and to drench my love:
There happily to lose my long desires;
But ah! what draught so deep to quench my fires?

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Farewell, ye never-opening gates, ye stones,
And threshold guilty of my midnight moans!
What I have suffered here ye know too well;
What I shall do, the Gods and I can tell.
The rose is fragrant, but it fades in time;
The violet sweet, but quickly past the prime;
White lilies hang their heads, and soon decay,
And whiter snow in minutes melts away:
Such is your blooming youth, and withering so;
The time will come, it will, when you shall know
The rage of love; your haughty heart shall burn
In flames like mine, and meet a like return.
Obdurate as you are, oh! hear at least
My dying prayers, and grant my last request!—
When first you ope your doors, and, passing by,
The sad ill-omened object meets your eye,
Think it not lost a moment if you stay;
The breathless wretch, so made by you, survey;
Some cruel pleasure will from thence arise,
To view the mighty ravage of your eyes.
I wish (but oh! my wish is vain, I fear)
The kind oblation of a falling tear.
Then loose the knot, and take me from the place,
And spread your mantle o'er my grisly face;
Upon my livid lips bestow a kiss,—
O envy not the dead, they feel not bliss!
Nor fear your kisses can restore my breath;
Even you are not more pitiless than death.
Then for my corpse a homely grave provide,
Which love and me from public scorn may hide;
Thrice call upon my name, thrice beat your breast,
And hail me thrice to everlasting rest:
Last, let my tomb this sad inscription bear;—
'A wretch, whom love has killed, lies buried here;
O passengers, Aminta's eyes beware.'"

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Thus having said, and furious with his love,
He heaved, with more than human force, to move
A weighty stone, (the labour of a team,)
And, raised from thence, he reached the neighbouring beam;
Around its bulk a sliding knot he throws,
And fitted to his neck the fatal noose;
Then, spurning backward, took a swing, till death
Crept up, and stopt the passage of his breath.
The bounce burst ope the door; the scornful fair
Relentless looked, and saw him beat his quivering feet in air;
Nor wept his fate, nor cast a pitying eye,
Nor took him down, but brushed regardless by;
And, as she passed, her chance or fate was such,
Her garments touched the dead, polluted by the touch.
Next to the dance, thence to the bath did move;
The bath was sacred to the God of Love;
Whose injured image, with a wrathful eye,
Stood threatening from a pedestal on high.
Nodding a while, and watchful of his blow,
He fell, and, falling, crushed the ungrateful nymph below:
Her gushing blood the pavement all besmeared;
And this her last expiring voice was heard;—
"Lovers, farewell, revenge has reached my scorn;
Thus warned, be wise, and love for love return."

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DAPHNIS AND CHLORIS.

FROM THE

TWENTY-SEVENTH IDYLLIUM OF THEOCRITUS.

DAPHNIS.

THE shepherd Paris bore the Spartan bride
By force away, and then by force enjoyed;
But I by free consent can boast a bliss,
A fairer Helen, and a sweeter kiss.

CHLORIS.

Kisses are empty joys, and soon are o'er.

DAPHNIS.

A kiss betwixt the lips is something more.

CHLORIS.

I wipe my mouth, and where 's your kissing then?

DAPHNIS.

I swear you wipe it to be kissed again.

CHLORIS.

Go, tend your herd, and kiss your cows at home;
I am a maid, and in my beauty's bloom.

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DAPHNIS.

'Tis well remembered; do not waste your time,
But wisely use it ere you pass your prime.

CHLORIS.

Blown roses hold their sweetness to the last,
And raisins keep their luscious native taste.

DAPHNIS.

The sun's too hot; those olive shades are near;
I fain would whisper something in your ear.

CHLORIS.

'Tis honest talking where we may be seen;
God knows what secret mischief you may mean;
I doubt you 'll play the wag, and kiss again.

DAPHNIS.

At least beneath yon elm you need not fear;
My pipe 's in tune, if you 're disposed to hear.

CHLORIS.

Play by yourself, I dare not venture thither;
You, and your naughty pipe, go hang together.

DAPHNIS.

Coy nymph, beware, lest Venus you offend.

CHLORIS.

I shall have chaste Diana still to friend.

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DAPHNIS.

You have a soul, and Cupid has a dart.

CHLORIS.

Diana will defend, or heal my heart.
Nay, fie, what mean you in this open place?
Unhand me, or I swear I 'll scratch your face.
Let go for shame; you make me mad for spite;
My mouth 's my own; and, if you kiss, I 'll bite;

DAPHNIS.

Away with your dissembling female tricks;
What, would you 'scape the fate of all your sex?

CHLORIS.

I swear, I 'll keep my maidenhead till death,
And die as pure as Queen Elizabeth.

DAPHNIS.

Nay, mum for that, but let me lay thee down;
Better with me, than with some nauseous clown.

CHLORIS.

I 'd have you know, if I were so inclined,
I have been woo'd by many a wealthy hind;
But never found a husband to my mind.

DAPHNIS.

But they are absent all, and I am here.

CHLORIS.

The matrimonial yoke is hard to bear,
And marriage is a woful word to hear.

DAPHNIS.

A scarecrow, set to frighten fools away;
Marriage has joys, and you shall have assay.

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CHLORIS.

Sour sauce is often mixed with our delight;
You kick by day more than you kiss by night.

DAPHNIS.

Sham stories all; but say the worst you can,
A very wife fears neither God nor man.

CHLORIS.

But childbirth is, they say, a deadly pain;
It costs at least a month to knit again.

DAPHNIS.

Diana cures the wounds Lucina made;
Your goddess is a midwife by her trade.

CHLORIS.

But I shall spoil my beauty, if I bear.

DAPHNIS.

But Mam and Dad are pretty names to hear.

CHLORIS.

But there 's a civil question used of late;
Where lies my jointure, where your own estate?

DAPHNIS.

My flocks, my fields, my woods, my pastures take,
With settlement as good as law can make.

CHLORIS.

Swear then you will not leave me on the common,
But marry me, and make an honest woman.

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DAPHNIS.

I swear by Pan, though he wears horns you 'll say,
Cudgelled and kicked, I 'll not be forced away.

CHLORIS.

I bargain for a wedding-bed at least,
A house, and handsome lodging for a guest.

DAPHNIS.

A house well furnished shall be thine to keep;
And, for a flock-bed, I can shear my sheep.

CHLORIS.

What tale shall I to my old father tell?

DAPHNIS.

'Twill make him chuckle thou 'rt bestowed so well.

CHLORÍS.

But, after all, in troth I am to blame
To be so loving, ere I know your name;
A pleasant sounding name 's a pretty thing.

DAPHNIS.

Faith, mine 's a very pretty name to sing.
They call me Daphnis; Lycidas my sire;
Both sound as well as woman can desire.
Nomæa bore me; farmers in degree;
He a good husband, a good housewife she.

CHLORIS.

Your kindred is not much amiss, 'tis true;
Yet I am somewhat better born than you.

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DAPHNIS.

I know your father, and his family;
And, without boasting, am as good as he,
Menalcas; and no master goes before.*

CHLORIS.

Hang both our pedigrees! not one word more;
But if you love me, let me see your living,
Your house, and home; for seeing is believing.

DAPHNIS.

See first yon cypress grove, a shade from noon.

CHLORIS.

Browse on, my goats; for I 'll be with you soon.

DAPHNIS.

Feed well, my bulls, to whet your appetite,
That each may take a lusty leap at night.

CHLORIS.

What do you mean, uncivil as you are,
To touch my breasts, and leave my bosom bare?

DAPHNIS.

These pretty bubbies, first, I make my own.

CHLORIS.

Pull out your hand, I swear, or I shall swoon.

DAPHNIS.

Why does thy ebbing blood forsake thy face?

CHLORIS.

Throw me at least upon a cleaner place;
My linen ruffled, and my waistcoat soiling—
What, do you think new clothes were made for spoiling?

* [*I.e.*, he is a plain yeoman.—Ed.]

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DAPHNIS.

I 'll lay my lambkins underneath thy back.

CHLORIS.

My head-gear 's off; what filthy work you make!

DAPHNIS.

To Venus, first, I lay these offerings by.

CHLORIS.

Nay, first look round, that nobody be nigh :
Methinks I hear a whispering in the grove.

DAPHNIS.

The cypress trees are telling tales of love.

CHLORIS.

You tear off all behind me, and before me ;
And I 'm as naked as my mother bore me.

DAPHNIS.

I 'll buy thee better clothes than these I tear,
And lie so close I 'll cover thee from air.

CHLORIS.

You 're liberal now ; but when your turn is sped,
You 'll wish me choked with every crust of bread.

DAPHNIS.

I 'll give thee more, much more than I have told ;
Would I could coin my very heart to gold!

CHLORIS.

Forgive thy handmaid, huntress of the wood!
I see there 's no resisting flesh and blood!

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DAPHNIS.

The noble deed is done!—my herds I 'll cull;
Cupid, be thine a calf; and Venus, thine a bull.

CHLORIS.

A maid I came in an unlucky hour,
But hence return without my virgin flower.

DAPHNIS.

A maid is but a barren name at best;
If thou canst hold, I bid for twins at least.

Thus did this happy pair their love dispense
With mutual joys, and gratified their sense;
The God of Love was there, a bidden guest,
And present at his own mysterious feast.
His azure mantle underneath he spread,
And scattered roses on the nuptial bed;
While folded in each other's arms they lay,
He blew the flames, and furnished out the play,
And from their foreheads wiped the balmy sweat away.
First rose the maid, and with a glowing face,
Her downcast eyes beheld her print upon the grass;
Thence to her herd she sped herself in haste:
The bridegroom started from his trance at last,
And piping homeward jocundly he past.

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TRANSLATIONS

FROM

LUCRETIUS.

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THE

BEGINNING OF

THE FIRST BOOK

OF

LUCRETIUS.

DELIGHT of humankind, and gods above,
Parent of Rome, propitious Queen of Love!
Whose vital power, air, earth, and sea supplies,
And breeds whate'er is born beneath the rolling skies;
For every kind, by thy prolific might,
Springs, and beholds the regions of the light.
Thee, goddess, thee the clouds and tempests fear,
And at thy pleasing presence disappear;
For thee the land in fragrant flowers is drest;
For thee the ocean smiles, and smooths her wavy breast,
And heaven itself with more serene and purer light is blest.
For, when the rising spring adorns the mead,
And a new scene of nature stands displayed,
When teeming buds, and cheerful greens appear,
And western gales unlock the lazy year;
The joyous birds thy welcome first express,
Whose native songs thy genial fire confess;

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Then savage beasts bound o'er their slighted food,
Struck with thy darts, and tempt the raging flood.
All nature is thy gift; earth, air, and sea;
Of all that breathes, the various progeny,
Stung with delight, is goaded on by thee.
O'er barren mountains, o'er the flowery plain,
The leafy forest, and the liquid main,
Extends thy uncontrolled and boundless reign;
Through all the living regions dost thou move,
And scatterest, where thou goest, the kindly seeds of love.
Since, then, the race of every living thing
Obeys thy power; since nothing new can spring
Without thy warmth, without thy influence bear,
Or beautiful, or lovesome can appear;
Be thou my aid, my tuneful song inspire,
And kindle with thy own productive fire;
While all thy province, Nature, I survey,
And sing to Memmius an immortal lay
Of heaven and earth, and everywhere thy wondrous power display:
To Memmius, under thy sweet influence born,
Whom thou with all thy gifts and graces dost adorn.
The rather then assist my Muse and me,
Infusing verses worthy him and thee.
Meantime on land and sea let barbarous discord cease,
And lull the list'ning world in universal peace.
To thee mankind their soft repose must owe,
For thou alone that blessing canst bestow;
Because the brutal business of the war
Is managed by thy dreadful servant's care;
Who oft retires from fighting fields, to prove
The pleasing pains of thy eternal love;

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And, panting on thy breast, supinely lies,
While with thy heavenly form he feeds his famished eyes;
Sucks in with open lips thy balmy breath,
By turns restored to life, and plunged in pleasing death.
There while thy curling limbs about him move,
Involved and fettered in the links of love,
When, wishing all, he nothing can deny,
Thy charms in that auspicious moment try;
With winning eloquence our peace implore,
And quiet to the weary world restore.

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THE

BEGINNING OF

THE SECOND BOOK

OF

LUCRETIUS.

'Tis pleasant, safely to behold from shore
The rolling ship, and hear the tempest roar;
Not that another's pain is our delight,
But pains unfelt produce the pleasing sight.
'Tis pleasant also to behold from far
The moving legions mingled in the war;
But much more sweet thy labouring steps to guide
To virtue's heights, with wisdom well supplied,
And all the magazines of learning fortified;
From thence to look below on humankind,
Bewildered in the maze of life, and blind;
To see vain fools ambitiously contend
For wit and power; their last endeavours bend
To outshine each other, waste their time and health
In search of honour, and pursuit of wealth.
O wretched man! in what a mist of life,
Inclosed with dangers and with noisy strife,

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He spends his little span; and overfeeds
His crammed desires, with more than nature needs!
For nature wisely stints our appetite,
And craves no more than undisturbed delight;
Which minds, unmixed with cares and fears, obtain;
A soul serene, a body void of pain.
So little this corporeal frame requires,
So bounded are our natural desires,
That wanting all, and setting pain aside,
With bare privation sense is satisfied.
If golden sconces hang not on the walls,
To light the costly suppers and the balls;
If the proud palace shines not with the state
Of burnished bowls, and of reflected plate;
If well-tuned harps, nor the more pleasing sound
Of voices, from the vaulted roofs rebound;
Yet on the grass, beneath a poplar shade,
By the cool stream, our careless limbs are laid;
With cheaper pleasures innocently blest,
When the warm spring with gaudy flowers is drest.
Nor will the raging fever's fire abate,
With golden canopies, and beds of state;
But the poor patient will as soon be sound
On the hard mattress, or the mother ground.
Then since our bodies are not eased the more
By birth, or power, or fortune's wealthy store,
'Tis plain, these useless toys of every kind
As little can relieve the labouring mind;
Unless we could suppose the dreadful sight
Of marshalled legions moving to the fight,
Could, with their sound and terrible array,
Expel our fears, and drive the thoughts of death away.
But, since the supposition vain appears,
Since clinging cares, and trains of inbred fears,

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Are not with sounds to be affrighted thence,
But in the midst of pomp pursue the prince,
Not awed by arms, but in the presence bold,
Without respect to purple, or to gold;
Why should not we these pageantries despise,
Whose worth but in our want of reason lies?
For life is all in wandering errors led;
And just as children are surprised with dread,
And tremble in the dark, so riper years,
Even in broad day-light, are possessed with fears,
And shake at shadows fanciful and vain,
As those which in the breasts of children reign.
These bugbears of the mind, this inward hell,
No rays of outward sunshine can dispel;
But nature and right reason must display
Their beams abroad, and bring the darksome soul to day.

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THE

LATTER PART OF

THE THIRD BOOK

OF

LUCRETIUS,

AGAINST THE FEAR OF DEATH.

WHAT has this bugbear, death, to frighten men,
If souls can die, as well as bodies can?
For, as before our birth we felt no pain,
When Punic arms infested land and main,
When heaven and earth were in confusion hurled,
For the debated empire of the world,
Which awed with dreadful expectation lay,
Sure to be slaves, uncertain who should sway:
So, when our mortal flame shall be disjoined,
The lifeless lump uncoupled from the mind,
From sense of grief and pain we shall be free;
We shall not feel, because we shall not be.
Though earth in seas, and seas in heaven were lost,
We should not move, we only should be tost.

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Nay, even suppose, when we have suffered fate,
The soul could feel in her divided state,
What 's that to us? for we are only we,
While souls and bodies in one frame agree.
Nay, though our atoms should revolve by chance,
And matter leap into the former dance;
Though time our life and motion could restore,
And make our bodies what they were before;
What gain to us would all this bustle bring?
The new-made man would be another thing.
When once an interrupting pause is made,
That individual being is decayed.
We, who are dead and gone, shall bear no part
In all the pleasures, nor shall feel the smart,
Which to that other mortal shall accrue,
Whom of our matter time shall mould anew.
For backward if you look on that long space
Of ages past, and view the changing face
Of matter, tost, and variously combined
In sundry shapes, 'tis easy for the mind
From thence to infer, that seeds of things have been
In the same order as they now are seen;
Which yet our dark remembrance cannot trace,
Because a pause of life, a gaping space,
Has come betwixt, where memory lies dead,
And all the wandering motions from the sense are fled.
For, whosoe'er shall in misfortunes live,
Must *be*, when those misfortunes shall arrive;
And since the man who *is* not, feels not woe,
(For death exempts him, and wards off the blow,
Which we, the living, only feel and bear,)
What is there left for us in death to fear?
When once that pause of life has come between,
'Tis just the same as we had never been.

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And, therefore, if a man bemoan his lot,
That after death his mouldering limbs shall rot,
Or flames, or jaws of beasts devour his mass,
Know, he 's an unsincere, unthinking ass.
A secret sting remains within his mind;
The fool is to his own cast offals kind.
He boasts no sense can after death remain;
Yet makes himself a part of life again,
As if some other *he* could feel the pain.
If, while we live, this thought molest his head,
What wolf or vulture shall devour me dead?
He wastes his days in idle grief, nor can
Distinguish 'twixt the body and the man;
But thinks himself can still himself survive,
And, what when dead he feels not, feels alive.
Then he repines that he was born to die,
Nor knows in death there is no other *he*,
No living *he* remains his grief to vent,
And o'er his senseless carcase to lament.
If, after death, 'tis painful to be torn
By birds, and beasts, then why not so to burn,
Or drenched in floods of honey to be soaked,
Embalmed to be at once preserved and choked;
Or on an airy mountain's top to lie,
Exposed to cold and heaven's inclemency;
Or crowded in a tomb, to be opprest
With monumental marble on thy breast?
But to be snatched from all the household joys,
From thy chaste wife, and thy dear prattling boys,
Whose little arms about thy legs are cast,
And climbing for a kiss prevent their mother's haste,
Inspiring secret pleasure through thy breast;
Ah! these shall be no more; thy friends oppress
Thy care and courage now no more shall free;
"Ah! wretch," thou criest, "ah! miserable me!

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One woful day sweeps children, friends, and wife,
And all the brittle blessings of my life!"
Add one thing more, and all thou say'st is true;
Thy want and wish of them is vanished too;
Which, well considered, were a quick relief
To all thy vain imaginary grief:
For thou shalt sleep, and never wake again,
And, quitting life, shalt quit thy loving pain.
But we, thy friends, shall all those sorrows find,
Which in forgetful death thou leav'st behind;
No time shall dry our tears, nor drive thee from our mind.
The worst that can befall thee, measured right,
Is a sound slumber, and a long good-night.
Yet thus the fools, that would be thought the wits,
Disturb their mirth with melancholy fits;
When healths go round, and kindly brimmers flow,
Till the fresh garlands on their foreheads glow,
They whine, and cry, "Let us make haste to live,
Short are the joys that human life can give."
Eternal preachers, that corrupt the draught,
And pall the god, that never thinks, with thought;
Idiots with all that thought, to whom the worst
Of death, is want of drink, and endless thirst,
Or any fond desire as vain as these.
For, even in sleep, the body, wrapt in ease,
Supinely lies, as in the peaceful grave;
And, wanting nothing, nothing can it crave.
Were that sound sleep eternal, it were death;
Yet the first atoms then, the seeds of breath,
Are moving near to sense; we do but shake
And rouse that sense, and straight we are awake.
Then death to us, and death's anxiety,
Is less than nothing, if a less could be;

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For then our atoms, which in order lay,
Are scattered from their heap, and puffed away,
And never can return into their place,
When once the pause of life has left an empty space.
And, last, suppose great Nature's voice should call
To thee, or me, or any of us all,—
" What dost thou mean, ungrateful wretch, thou vain,
Thou mortal thing, thus idly to complain,
And sigh and sob, that thou shalt be no more?
For, if thy life were pleasant heretofore,
If all the bounteous blessings I could give
Thou hast enjoyed, if thou hast known to live,
And pleasure not leaked through thee like a sieve;
Why dost thou not give thanks as at a plenteous feast,
Crammed to the throat with life, and rise and take thy rest?
But, if my blessings thou hast thrown away,
If undigested joys passed through, and would not stay,
Why dost thou wish for more to squander still?
If life be grown a load, a real ill,
And I would all thy cares and labours end,
Lay down thy burden, fool, and know thy friend.
To please thee, I have emptied all my store;
I can invent, and can supply no more,
But run the round again, the round I ran before.
Suppose thou art not broken yet with years,
Yet still the self-same scene of things appears,
And would be ever, couldst thou ever live;
For life is still but life, there's nothing new to give."
What can we plead against so just a bill?
We stand convicted, and our cause goes ill.

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But if a wretch, a man oppressed by fate,
Should beg of nature to prolong his date,
She speaks aloud to him with more disdain,—
"Be still, thou martyr fool, thou covetous of pain."
But if an old decrepit sot lament,—
"What, thou!" she cries, "who hast outlived content!
Dost thou complain, who hast enjoyed my store?
But this is still the effect of wishing more.
Unsatisfied with all that nature brings;
Loathing the present, liking absent things;
From hence it comes, thy vain desires, at strife
Within themselves, have tantalised thy life,
And ghastly death appeared before thy sight,
Ere thou hast gorged thy soul and senses with delight.
Now leave those joys, unsuiting to thy age,
To a fresh comer, and resign the stage."
Is Nature to be blamed if thus she chide?
No, sure; for 'tis her business to provide
Against this ever-changing frame's decay,
New things to come, and old to pass away.
One being, worn, another being makes;
Changed, but not lost; for nature gives and takes:
New matter must be found for things to come,
And these must waste like those, and follow nature's doom.
All things, like thee, have time to rise and rot,
And from each other's ruin are begot:
For life is not confined to him or thee;
'Tis given to all for use, to none for property.
Consider former ages past and gone,
Whose circles ended long ere thine begun,
Then tell me, fool, what part in them thou hast?
Thus may'st thou judge the future by the past.

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What horror seest thou in that quiet state,
What bugbear dreams to fright thee after fate?
No ghost, no goblins, that still passage keep;
But all is there serene, in that eternal sleep.
For all the dismal tales, that poets tell,
Are verified on earth, and not in hell.
No Tantalus looks up with fearful eye,
Or dreads the impending rock to crush him from on high;
But fear of chance on earth disturbs our easy hours,
Or vain imagined wrath of vain imagined powers.
No Tityus torn by vultures lies in hell;
Nor could the lobes of his rank liver swell
To that prodigious mass, for their eternal meal;
Not though his monstrous bulk had covered o'er
Nine spreading acres, or nine thousand more;
Not though the globe of earth had been the giant's floor;
Nor in eternal torments could he lie,
Nor could his corpse sufficient food supply.
But he 's the Tityus, who, by love opprest,
Or tyrant passion preying on his breast,
And ever anxious thoughts, is robbed of rest.
The Sisyphus is he, whom noise and strife
Seduce from all the soft retreats of life,
To vex the government, disturb the laws;
Drunk with the fumes of popular applause,
He courts the giddy crowd to make him great,
And sweats and toils in vain, to mount the sovereign seat.
For, still to aim at power, and still to fail,
Ever to strive, and never to prevail,
What is it, but, in reason's true account,
To heave the stone against the rising mount?

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Which urged, and laboured, and forced up with pain,
Recoils, and rolls impetuous down, and smokes along the plain.
Then, still to treat thy ever-craving mind
With every blessing, and of every kind,
Yet never fill thy ravening appetite,
Though years and seasons vary thy delight,
Yet nothing to be seen of all the store,
But still the wolf within thee barks for more;
This is the fable's moral, which they tell
Of fifty foolish virgins damned in hell
To leaky vessels, which the liquor spill;
To vessels of their sex, which none could ever fill.
As for the dog, the furies, and their snakes,
The gloomy caverns, and the burning lakes,
And all the vain infernal trumpery,
They neither are, nor were, nor e'er can be.
But here, on earth, the guilty have in view
The mighty pains to mighty mischiefs due;
Racks, prisons, poisons, the Tarpeian rock,
Stripes, hangmen, pitch, and suffocating smoke;
And last, and most, if these were cast behind,
The avenging horror of a conscious mind;
Whose deadly fear anticipates the blow,
And sees no end of punishment and woe,
But looks for more, at the last gasp of breath;
This makes an hell on earth, and life a death.
Meantime, when thoughts of death disturb thy head,
Consider, Ancus, great and good, is dead;
Ancus, thy better far, was born to die,
And thou, dost thou bewail mortality?
So many monarchs with their mighty state,
Who ruled the world, were overruled by fate.

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That haughty king, who lorded o'er the main,
And whose stupendous bridge did the wild waves restrain,
(In vain they foamed, in vain they threatened wreck,
While his proud legions marched upon their back,)
Him death, a greater monarch, overcame;
Nor spared his guards the more, for their immortal name.
The Roman chief, the Carthaginian dread,
Scipio, the thunderbolt of war, is dead,
And, like a common slave, by fate in triumph led.
The founders of invented arts are lost,
And wits, who made eternity their boast.
Where now is Homer, who possessed the throne?
The immortal work remains, the immortal author 's gone.
Democritus, perceiving age invade,
His body weakened, and his mind decayed,
Obeyed the summons with a cheerful face;
Made haste to welcome death, and met him half the race.
That stroke even Epicurus could not bar,
Though he in wit surpassed mankind, as far
As does the midday sun the midnight star.
And thou, dost thou disdain to yield thy breath,
Whose very life is little more than death?
More than one half by lazy sleep possest;
And when awake, thy soul but nods at best,
Day-dreams and sickly thoughts revolving in thy breast,
Eternal troubles haunt thy anxious mind,
Whose cause and cure thou never hop'st to find;
But still uncertain, with thyself at strife,
Thou wanderest in the labyrinth of life.
Oh, if the foolish race of man, who find
A weight of cares still pressing on their mind,

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Could find as well the cause of this unrest,
And all this burden lodged within the breast;
Sure they would change their course, nor live as now,
Uncertain what to wish, or what to vow.
Uneasy both in country and in town,
They search a place to lay their burden down.
One, restless in his palace, walks abroad,
And vainly thinks to leave behind the load,
But straight returns; for he 's as restless there,
And finds there 's no relief in open-air.
Another to his villa would retire,
And spurs as hard as if it were on fire;
No sooner entered at his country door,
But he begins to stretch, and yawn, and snore,
Or seeks the city, which he left before.
Thus every man o'erworks his weary will,
To shun himself, and to shake off his ill;
The shaking fit returns, and hangs upon him still.
No prospect of repose, nor hope of ease,
The wretch is ignorant of his disease;
Which, known, would all his fruitless trouble spare,
For he would know the world not worth his care:
Then would he search more deeply for the cause,
And study nature well, and nature's laws;
For in this moment lies not the debate,
But on our future, fixed, eternal state;
That never-changing state, which all must keep,
Whom death has doomed to everlasting sleep.
Why are we then so fond of mortal life,
Beset with dangers, and maintained with strife?
A life, which all our care can never save;
One fate attends us, and one common grave.
Besides, we tread but a perpetual round;

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We ne'er strike out, but beat the former ground,
And the same mawkish joys in the same track
are found.
For still we think an absent blessing best,
Which cloys, and is no blessing when possest;
A new arising wish expels it from the breast.
The feverish thirst of life increases still;
We call for more and more, and never have our
fill;
Yet know not what to-morrow we shall try,
What dregs of life in the last draught may lie.
Nor, by the longest life we can attain,
One moment from the length of death we gain;
For all behind belongs to his eternal reign.
When once the fates have cut the mortal thread,
The man as much to all intents is dead,
Who dies to-day, and will as long be so,
As he who died a thousand years ago.

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THE

LATTER PART OF

THE FOURTH BOOK

OF

LUCRETIUS;

CONCERNING THE NATURE OF LOVE.

BEGINNING AT THIS LINE:

Sic igitur Veneris qui elis accipit ictum, etc.

THUS, therefore, he, who feels the fiery dart
Of strong desire transfix his amorous heart,
Whether some beauteous boy's alluring face,
Or lovelier maid, with unresisting grace,
From her each part the winged arrow sends,
From whence he first was struck he thither tends;
Restless he roams, impatient to be freed,
And eager to inject the sprightly seed;
For fierce desire does all his mind employ,
And ardent love assures approaching joy.
Such is the nature of that pleasing smart,
Whose burning drops distil upon the heart,

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The fever of the soul shot from the fair,
And the cold ague of succeeding care.
If absent, her idea still appears,
And her sweet name is chiming in your ears.
But strive those pleasing phantoms to remove,
And shun the aërial images of love,
That feed the flame: when one molests thy mind,
Discharge thy loins on all the leaky kind;
For that 's a wiser way, than to restrain
Within thy swelling nerves that hoard of pain.
For every hour some deadlier symptom shows,
And by delay the gathering venom grows,
When kindly applications are not used;
The scorpion, love, must on the wound be bruised.*
On that one object 'tis not safe to stay,
But force the tide of thought some other way;
The squandered spirits prodigally throw,
And in the common glebe of nature sow.
Nor wants he all the bliss that lovers feign,
Who takes the pleasure, and avoids the pain;
For purer joys in purer health abound,
And less affect the sickly than the sound.
When love its utmost vigour does employ,
Even then 'tis but a restless wandering joy;
Nor knows the lover in that wild excess,
With hands or eyes, what first he would possess;
But strains at all, and, fastening where he strains,
Too closely presses with his frantic pains;
With biting kisses hurts the twining fair,
Which shows his joys imperfect, insincere:
For, stung with inward rage, he flings around,
And strives to avenge the smart on that which gave the wound.

* [See Dryden on this, p. 295.—Ed.]

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But love those eager bitings does restrain,
And mingling pleasure mollifies the pain.
For ardent hope still flatters anxious grief,
And sends him to his foe to seek relief:
Which yet the nature of the thing denies;
For love, and love alone of all our joys,
By full possession does but fan the fire;
The more we still enjoy, the more we still desire.
Nature for meat and drink provides a space,
And, when received, they fill their certain place;
Hence thirst and hunger may be satisfied,
But this repletion is to love denied:
Form, feature, colour, whatsoe'er delight
Provokes the lover's endless appetite,
These fill no space, nor can we thence remove
With lips, or hands, or all our instruments of love:
In our deluded grasp we nothing find,
But thin aërial shapes, that fleet before the mind.
As he, who in a dream with drought is curst,
And finds no real drink to quench his thirst,
Runs to imagined lakes his heat to steep,
And vainly swills and labours in his sleep;
So love with phantoms cheats our longing eyes,
Which hourly seeing never satisfies:
Our hands pull nothing from the parts they strain,
But wander o'er the lovely limbs in vain.
Nor when the youthful pair more closely join,
When hands in hands they lock, and thighs in thighs they twine,
Just in the raging foam of full desire,
When both press on, both murmur, both expire,
They gripe, they squeeze, their humid tongues they dart,
As each would force their way to t'other's heart:
In vain; they only cruise about the coast;
For bodies cannot pierce, nor be in bodies lost,

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As sure they strive to be, when both engage
In that tumultuous momentary rage;
So tangled in the nets of love they lie,
Till man dissolves in that excess of joy.
Then, when the gathered bag has burst its way,
And ebbing tides the slackened nerves betray,
A pause ensues; and nature nods awhile,
Till with recruited rage new spirits boil;
And then the same vain violence returns,
With flames renewed the erected furnace burns;
Again they in each other would be lost,
But still by adamantine bars are crost.
All ways they try, successless all they prove,
To cure the secret sore of lingering love.
Besides——
They waste their strength in the venereal strife,
And to a woman's will enslave their life;
The estate runs out, and mortgages are made,
All offices of friendship are decayed,
Their fortune ruined, and their fame betrayed.
Assyrian ointment from their temples flows,
And diamond buckles sparkle in their shoes;
The cheerful emerald twinkles on their hands,
With all the luxury of foreign lands;
And the blue coat, that with embroidery shines,
Is drunk with sweat of their o'er-laboured loins.
Their frugal father's gains they misemploy,
And turn to point, and pearl, and every female toy.
French fashions, costly treats are their delight;
The park by day, and plays and balls by night.
In vain;——
For in the fountain, where their sweets are sought,
Some bitter bubbles up, and poisons all the draught.
First, guilty conscience does the mirror bring,
Then sharp remorse shoots out her angry sting;

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And anxious thoughts, within themselves at strife,
Upbraid the long misspent, luxurious life.
Perhaps, the fickle fair one proves unkind,
Or drops a doubtful word, that pains his mind,
And leaves a rankling jealousy behind.
Perhaps, he watches close her amorous eyes,
And in the act of ogling does surprise,
And thinks he sees upon her cheeks the while
The dimpled tracks of some foregoing smile;
His raging pulse beats thick, and his pent spirits boil.
This is the product e'en of prosp'rous love;
Think then what pangs disastrous passions prove;
Innumerable ills; disdain, despair,
With all the meagre family of care.
Thus, as I said, 'tis better to prevent,
Than flatter the disease, and late repent;
Because to shun the allurement is not hard
To minds resolved, forewarned, and well prepared;
But wondrous difficult, when once beset,
To struggle through the straits, and break the involving net.
Yet, thus ensnared, thy freedom thou may'st gain,
If, like a fool, thou dost not hug thy chain;
If not to ruin obstinately blind,
And wilfully endeavouring not to find
Her plain defects of body and of mind.
For thus the bedlam train of lovers use
To enhance the value, and the faults excuse;
And therefore 'tis no wonder if we see
They dote on dowdies and deformity.
Even what they cannot praise, they will not blame,
But veil with some extenuating name.
The sallow skin is for the swarthy put,
And love can make a slattern of a slut;

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If cat-eyed, then a Pallas is their love;
If freckled, she 's a party-coloured dove;
If little, then she 's life and soul all o'er;
An Amazon, the large two-handed* whore.
She stammers; oh, what grace in lisping lies!
If she says nothing, to be sure she 's wise.
If shrill, and with a voice to drown a quire,
Sharp-witted she must be, and full of fire;
The lean, consumptive wench, with coughs decayed,
Is called a pretty, tight, and slender maid;
The o'ergrown, a goodly Ceres is exprest,
A bed-fellow for Bacchus at the least;
Flat-nose the name of Satyr never misses,
And hanging blobber lips but pout for kisses.
The task were endless all the rest to trace;
Yet grant she were a Venus for her face
And shape, yet others equal beauty share,
And time was you could live without the fair;
She does no more, in that for which you woo,
Than homelier women full as well can do.
Besides, she daubs, and stinks so much of paint,
Her own attendants cannot bear the scent,
But laugh behind, and bite their lips to hold.
Meantime, excluded, and exposed to cold,
The whining lover stands before the gates,
And there with humble adoration waits;
Crowning with flowers the threshold and the floor,
And printing kisses on the obdurate door;
Who, if admitted in that nick of time,
If some unsavoury whiff betray the crime,
Invents a quarrel straight, if there be none,
Or makes some faint excuses to be gone;
And calls himself a doting fool to serve,
Ascribing more than woman can deserve.

* ["Two-handed"=extra-sized, strapping.—Ed.]

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Which well they understand, like cunning queans,
And hide their nastiness behind the scenes,
From him they have allured, and would retain;
But to a piercing eye 'tis all in vain:
For common sense brings all their cheats to view,
And the false light discovers by the true;
Which a wise harlot owns, and hopes to find
A pardon for defects, that run through all the kind.
Nor always do they feign the sweets of love,
When round the panting youth their pliant limbs they move,
And cling, and heave, and moisten every kiss;
They often share, and more than share the bliss:
From every part, even to their inmost soul,
They feel the trickling joys, and run with vigour to the goal.
Stirred with the same impetuous desire,
Birds, beasts, and herds, and mares, their males require;
Because the throbbing nature in their veins
Provokes them to assuage their kindly pains.
The lusty leap the expecting female stands,
By mutual heat compelled to mutual bands.
Thus dogs with lolling tongues by love are tied,
Nor shouting boys nor blows their union can divide;
At either end they strive the link to loose,
In vain, for stronger Venus holds the noose;
Which never would those wretched lovers do,
But that the common heats of love they know;
The pleasure therefore must be shared in common too:
And when the woman's more prevailing juice
Sucks in the man's, the mixture will produce
The mother's likeness; when the man prevails,
His own resemblance in the seed he seals.

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But when we see the new-begotten race
Reflect the features of each parent's face,
Then of the father's and the mother's blood
The justly tempered seed is understood;
When both conspire, with equal ardour bent,
From every limb the due proportion sent,
When neither party foils, when neither * foiled,
This gives the splendid features of the child.
Sometimes the boy the grandsire's image bears;
Sometimes the more remote progenitor he shares;
Because the genial atoms of the seed
Lie long concealed ere they exert the breed;
And, after sundry ages past, produce
The tardy likeness of the latent juice.
Hence, families such different figures take,
And represent their ancestors in face, and hair, and make;
Because of the same seed, the voice, and hair,
And shape, and face, and other members are,
And the same antique mould the likeness does prepare.
Thus, oft the father's likeness does prevail
In females, and the mother's in the male;
For, since the seed is of a double kind,
From that, where we the most resemblance find,
We may conclude the strongest tincture sent,
And that was in conception prevalent.
Nor can the vain decrees of powers above
Deny production to the act of love,
Or hinder fathers of that happy name,
Or with a barren womb the matron shame;
As many think, who stain with victims' blood
The mournful altars, and with incense load,
To bless the showery seed with future life,
And to impregnate the well-laboured wife.

* [Neither 's ?—Ed.]

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In vain they weary heaven with prayer, or fly
To oracles, or magic numbers try;
For barrenness of sexes will proceed
Either from too condensed, or watery, seed:
The watery juice too soon dissolves away,
And in the parts projected will not stay;
The too condensed, unsouled, unwieldy mass,
Drops short, nor carries to the destined place;
Nor pierces to the parts, nor, though injected home,
Will mingle with the kindly moisture of the womb.
For nuptials are unlike in their success;
Some men with fruitful seed some women bless,
And from some men some women fruitful are,
Just as their constitutions join or jar:
And many seeming barren wives have been,
Who after, matched with more prolific men,
Have filled a family with prattling boys;
And many, not supplied at home with joys,
Have found a friend abroad to ease their smart,
And to perform the sapless husband's part.
So much it does import, that seed with seed
Should of the kindly mixture make the breed;
And thick with thin, and thin with thick should join,
So to produce and propagate the line.
Of such concernment too is drink and food,
To incrassate, or attenuate the blood.
Of like importance is the posture too,
In which the genial feat of love we do;
For, as the females of the four-foot kind
Receive the leapings of their males behind,
So the good wives, with loins uplifted high,
And leaning on their hands, the fruitful stroke may try:

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For in that posture will they best conceive;
Not when, supinely laid, they frisk and heave;
For active motions only break the blow,
And more of strumpets than the wives they show,
When, answering stroke with stroke, the mingled liquors flow.
Endearments eager, and too brisk a bound,
Throw off the plough-share from the furrowed ground;
But common harlots in conjunction heave,
Because 'tis less their business to conceive
Than to delight, and to provoke the deed;
A trick which honest wives but little need.
Nor is it from the gods, or Cupid's dart,
That many a homely woman takes the heart,
But wives well-humoured, dutiful, and chaste,
And clean, will hold their wandering husbands fast;
Such are the links of love, and such a love will last.
For what remains, long habitude, and use,
Will kindness in domestic bands produce;
For custom will a strong impression leave.
Hard bodies, which the lightest stroke receive,
In length of time will moulder and decay,
And stones with drops of rain are washed away.

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FROM

THE FIFTH BOOK

OF

LUCRETIUS.

Tum porrò puer, etc.

THUS, like a sailor by a tempest hurled
Ashore, the babe is shipwrecked on the world.
Naked he lies, and ready to expire,
Helpless of all that human wants require;
Exposed upon unhospitable earth,
From the first moment of his hapless birth.
Straight with foreboding cries he fills the room,
Too true presages of his future doom.
But flocks and herds, and every savage beast,
By more indulgent nature are increased:
They want no rattles for their froward mood,
Nor nurse to reconcile them to their food,
With broken words; nor winter blasts they fear,
Nor change their habits with the changing year;
Nor, for their safety, citadels prepare,
Nor forge the wicked instruments of war;
Unlaboured earth her bounteous treasure grants,
And nature's lavish hand supplies their common wants.

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TRANSLATIONS

FROM

HORACE.

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THE

THIRD ODE OF THE FIRST BOOK

OF

HORACE.

INSCRIBED TO

THE EARL OF ROSCOMMON,

ON HIS INTENDED VOYAGE TO IRELAND.*

So may the auspicious queen of love,
And the twin stars, the seed of Jove,
And he who rules the raging wind,
To thee, O sacred ship, be kind;

* Wentworth Dillon, Earl of Roscommon, an elegant poet and accomplished nobleman, was created captain of the band of pensioners after the Restoration, and made a considerable figure at the court of Charles II. But, having injured his fortune by gaming, and being engaged in a lawsuit with the Lord Privy Seal concerning a considerable part of his estate, he found himself obliged to retire to Ireland, and resigned his post at the English Court. After having resided some years in that kingdom, where he enjoyed the post of captain of the guards to the Duke of Ormond, he returned to England, where he died in 1684. Besides the ode which follows, there are several traces through Dryden's works of his intimacy with Roscommon.

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And gentle breezes fill thy sails,
Supplying soft Etesian gales:
As thou, to whom the muse commends
The best of poets and of friends,
Dost thy committed pledge restore,
And land him safely on the shore;
And save the better part of me,
From perishing with him at sea.
Sure he, who first the passage tried,
In hardened oak his heart did hide,
And ribs of iron armed his side;
Or his at least, in hollow wood,
Who tempted first the briny flood;
Nor feared the winds' contending roar,
Nor billows beating on the shore,
Nor Hyades portending rain,
Nor all the tyrants of the main.
What form of death could him affright,
Who unconcerned, with steadfast sight,
Could view the surges mounting steep,
And monsters rolling in the deep!
Could through the ranks of ruin go,
With storms above, and rocks below!
In vain did Nature's wise command
Divide the waters from the land,
If daring ships and men profane
Invade the inviolable main;
The eternal fences overleap,
And pass at will the boundless deep.
No toil, no hardship, can restrain
Ambitious man, inured to pain;
The more confined, the more he tries,
And at forbidden quarry flies.
Thus bold Prometheus did aspire,
And stole from Heaven the seeds of fire,
A train of ills, a ghastly crew,
The robber's blazing track pursue;

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Fierce famine with her meagre face,
And fevers of the fiery race,
In swarms the offending wretch surround,
All brooding on the blasted ground;
And limping death, lashed on by fate,
Comes up to shorten half our date.
This made not Dædalus beware,
With borrowed wings to sail in air;
To hell Alcides forced his way,
Plunged through the lake, and snatched the prey.
Nay, scarce the gods, or heavenly climes,
Are safe from our audacious crimes;
We reach at Jove's imperial crown,
And pull the unwilling thunder down.

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THE

NINTH ODE OF THE FIRST BOOK

OF

HORACE.

I.

Behold yon mountain's hoary height,
  Made higher with new mounts of snow;
Again behold the winter's weight
  Oppress the labouring woods below;
And streams, with icy fetters bound,
Benumbed and crampt to solid ground.

II.

With well-heaped logs dissolve the cold,
  And feed the genial hearth with fires;
Produce the wine, that makes us bold,
  And sprightly wit and love inspires:
For what hereafter shall betide,
God, if 'tis worth his care, provide.

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III.

Let him alone, with what he made,
To toss and turn the world below;
At his command the storms invade,
The winds by his commission blow;
Till with a nod he bids them cease,
And then the calm returns, and all is peace.

IV.

To-morrow and her works defy,
Lay hold upon the present hour,
And snatch the pleasures passing by,
To put them out of fortune's power:
Nor love, nor love's delights, disdain;
Whate'er thou gett'st to-day, is gain.

V.

Secure those golden early joys,
That youth unsoured with sorrow bears,
Ere withering time the taste destroys,
With sickness and unwieldy years.
For active sports, for pleasing rest,
This is the time to be possest;
The best is but in season best.

VI.

The appointed hour of promised bliss,
The pleasing whisper in the dark,
The half unwilling willing kiss,
The laugh that guides thee to the mark;
When the kind nymph would coyness feign,
And hides but to be found again;
These, these are joys the gods for youth ordain.

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THE TWENTY-NINTH ODE

OF

THE FIRST BOOK

OF

HORACE,

PARAPHRASED IN PINDARIC VERSE,

AND INSCRIBED TO THE

RIGHT HON. LAURENCE, EARL OF ROCHESTER.

I.

DESCENDED of an ancient line,
That long the Tuscan sceptre swayed,
Make haste to meet the generous wine,
Whose piercing is for thee delayed:
The rosy wreath is ready made,
And artful hands prepare
The fragrant Syrian oil, that shall perfume thy hair.

II.

When the wine sparkles from afar,
And the well-natured friend cries, "Come away!"
Make haste, and leave thy business and thy care,
No mortal interest can be worth thy stay.

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III.

Leave for a while thy costly country seat,
And, to be great indeed, forget
The nauseous pleasures of the great:
Make haste and come;
Come, and forsake thy cloying store;
Thy turret, that surveys, from high,
The smoke, and wealth, and noise of Rome,
And all the busy pageantry
That wise men scorn, and fools adore;
Come, give thy soul a loose, and taste the pleasures of the poor.

IV.

Sometimes 'tis grateful to the rich to try
A short vicissitude, and fit of poverty:
A savoury dish, a homely treat,
Where all is plain, where all is neat,
Without the stately spacious room,
The Persian carpet, or the Tyrian loom,
Clear up the cloudy foreheads of the great

V.

The sun is in the Lion mounted high;
The Syrian star
Barks from afar,
And with his sultry breath infects the sky;
The ground below is parched, the heavens above us fry:
The shepherd drives his fainting flock
Beneath the covert of a rock,
And seeks refreshing rivulets nigh:
The Sylvans to their shades retire,
Those very shades and streams new shades and streams require,
And want a cooling breeze of wind to fan the raging fire.

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VI.

Thou, what befits the new Lord Mayor,*
And what the city factions dare,
And what the Gallic arms will do,
And what the quiver-bearing foe,
Art anxiously inquisitive to know:
But God has, wisely, hid from human sight
The dark decrees of future fate,
And sown their seeds in depth of night;
He laughs at all the giddy turns of state,
When mortals search too soon, and fear too late.

VII.

Enjoy the present smiling hour,
And put it out of fortune's power;
The tide of business, like the running stream,
Is sometimes high, and sometimes low,
A quiet ebb, or a tempestuous flow,
And always in extreme.
Now with a noiseless gentle course
It keeps within the middle bed;
Anon it lifts aloft the head,
And bears down all before it with impetuous force:
And trunks of trees come rolling down,
Sheep and their folds together drown;
Both house and homestead into seas are borne,
And rocks are from their old foundations torn,
And woods, made thin with winds, their scattered honours mourn.

* The poem seems to have been written during the political conflicts in the city of London.

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VIII.

Happy the man, and he alone,
He, who can call to-day his own;
He who, secure within, can say,
"To-morrow do thy worst, for I have lived to-day:
Be fair, or foul, or rain, or shine,
The joys I have possessed, in spite of fate, are mine;
Not heaven itself upon the past has power,
But what has been, has been, and I have had my hour."

IX.

Fortune, that with malicious joy
Does man, her slave, oppress,
Proud of her office to destroy,
Is seldom pleased to bless:
Still various, and unconstant still,
But with an inclination to be ill,
Promotes, degrades, delights in strife,
And makes a lottery of life.
I can enjoy her while she 's kind;
But when she dances in the wind,
And shakes the wings, and will not stay,
I puff the prostitute away:
The little or the much she gave, is quietly resigned;
Content with poverty my soul I arm,
And virtue, though in rags, will keep me warm.

X.

What is 't to me,
Who never sail in her unfaithful sea,
If storms arise, and clouds grow black,
If the mast split, and threaten wreck?

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Then let the greedy merchant fear
For his ill-gotten gain;
And pray to gods that will not hear,
While the debating winds, and billows bear
His wealth into the main.
For me, secure from fortune's blows,
Secure of what I cannot lose,
In my small pinnace I can sail,
Contemning all the blustering roar;
And running with a merry gale,
With friendly stars my safety seek,
Within some little winding creek,
And see the storm ashore.

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THE SECOND EPODE

OF

HORACE.

"How happy in his low degree,
How rich in humble poverty, is he,
Who leads a quiet country life,
Discharged of business, void of strife,
And from the griping scrivener free?
Thus, ere the seeds of vice were sown,
Lived men in better ages born,
Who ploughed, with oxen of their own,
Their small paternal field of corn.
Nor trumpets summon him to war,
Nor drums disturb his morning sleep,
Nor knows he merchants' gainful care,
Nor fears the dangers of the deep.
The clamours of contentious law,
And court and state, he wisely shuns,
Nor bribed with hopes, nor dared with awe,
To servile salutations runs;
But either to the clasping vine
Does the supporting poplar wed,
Or with his pruning-hook disjoin
Unbearing branches from their head,
And grafts more happy in their stead:

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Or, climbing to a hilly steep,
He views his herds in vales afar,
Or shears his overburthened sheep,
Or mead for cooling drink prepares,
Or virgin honey in the jars.
Or in the now declining year,
When bounteous autumn rears his head,
He joys to pull the ripened pear,
And clustering grapes with purple spread.
The fairest of his fruit he serves,
Priapus, thy rewards:
Sylvanus too his part deserves,
Whose care the fences guards.
Sometimes beneath an ancient oak,
Or on the matted grass he lies;
No god of sleep he need invoke;
The stream, that o'er the pebbles flies,
With gentle slumber crowns his eyes.
The wind, that whistles through the sprays,
Maintains the concert of the song;
And hidden birds, with native lays,
The golden sleep prolong.
But when the blast of winter blows,
And hoary frost inverts the year,
Into the naked woods he goes,
And seeks the tusky boar to rear,
With well-mouthed hounds and pointed spear:
Or spreads his subtle nets from sight
With twinkling glasses, to betray
The larks that in the meshes light,
Or makes the fearful hare his prey.
Amidst his harmless easy joys
No anxious care invades his health,
Nor love his peace of mind destroys,
Nor wicked avarice of wealth.

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But if a chaste and pleasing wife,
To ease the business of his life,
Divides with him his household care,
Such as the Sabine matrons were,
Such as the swift Apulian's bride,
  Sun-burnt and swarthy though she be,
Will fire for winter nights provide,
  And without noise will oversee
  His children and his family,
And order all things till he come,
Sweaty and overlaboured, home;
If she in pens his flocks will fold,
  And then produce her dairy store,
With wine to drive away the cold,
  And unbought dainties of the poor;
Not oysters of the Lucrine lake
My sober appetite would wish,
Nor turbot, or the foreign fish
That rolling tempests overtake,
  And hither waft the costly dish.
Not heath-pout, or the rarer bird,
  Which Phasis or Ionia yields,
More pleasing morsels would afford
  Than the fat olives of my fields;
Than shards* or mallows for the pot,
  That keep the loosened body sound,
Or than the lamb, that falls by lot
  To the just guardian of my ground.
Amidst these feasts of happy swains,
  The jolly shepherd smiles to see
His flock returning from the plains;
  The farmer is as pleased as he,
To view his oxen sweating smoke,
Hear on their necks the loosened yoke;

* [Or "chards," "cardoons," edible thistles.—Ed.]

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To look upon his menial crew,
That sit around his cheerful hearth,
And bodies spent in toil renew
With wholesome food and country mirth."

This Morecraft * said within himself:
Resolved to leave the wicked town,
And live retired upon his own,
He called his money in:
But the prevailing love of pelf
Soon split him on the former shelf,—
He put it out again.

* [The usurer.—Ed.]

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TRANSLATIONS

FROM

HOMER.

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THE FIRST BOOK

OF

HOMER'S ILIAD.

THE ARGUMENT.

Chryses, priest of Apollo, brings presents to the Grecian princes, to ransom his daughter Chryseis, who was prisoner in the fleet. Agamemnon, the general, whose captive and mistress the young lady was, refuses to deliver her, threatens the venerable old man, and dismisses him with contumely. The priest craves vengeance of his God, who sends a plague among the Greeks; which occasions Achilles, their great champion, to summon a council of the chief officers: he encourages Calchas, the high priest and prophet, to tell the reason why the Gods were so much incensed against them. Calchas is fearful of provoking Agamemnon, till Achilles engages to protect him: then, emboldened by the hero, he accuses the general as the cause of all, by detaining the fair captive, and refusing the presents offered for her ransom. By this proceeding, Agamemnon is obliged, against his will, to restore Chryseis, with gifts, that he might appease the wrath of Phœbus; but, at the same time, to revenge himself on Achilles, sends to seize his slave Briseis. Achilles, thus affronted, complains to his mother Thetis; and begs her to revenge his injury, not only on the general, but on all the army, by giving victory to the Trojans, till the ungrateful king became sensible of his injustice. At the same time, he retires from the camp into his ships, and withdraws his aid from his countrymen. Thetis prefers her son's petition to Jupiter, who grants her suit. Juno suspects her errand, and quarrels with her husband for his grant; till Vulcan reconciles his parents with a bowl of nectar, and sends them peaceably to bed.

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THE wrath of Peleus' son, O muse, resound,
Whose dire effects the Grecian army found,
And many a hero, king, and hardy knight,
Were sent, in early youth, to shades of night:
Their limbs a prey to dogs and vultures made;
So was the sovereign will of Jove obeyed:
From that ill-omened hour when strife begun,
Betwixt Atrides great, and Thetis' godlike son.
What power provoked, and for what cause, relate,
Sowed in their breasts the seeds of stern debate:
Jove's and Latona's son his wrath expressed,
In vengeance of his violated priest,
Against the king of men; who, swoln with pride,
Refused his presents, and his prayers denied.
For this the God a swift contagion spread
Amid the camp, where heaps on heaps lay dead.
For venerable Chryses came to buy,
With gold and gifts of price, his daughter's liberty.
Suppliant before the Grecian chiefs he stood,
Awful, and armed with ensigns of his God:
Bare was his hoary head; one holy hand
Held forth his laurel crown, and one his sceptre of command.*
His suit was common; but above the rest,
To both the brother-princes thus addressed:—
"Ye sons of Atreus, and ye Grecian powers,
So may the Gods, who dwell in heavenly bowers,
Succeed your siege, accord the vows you make,
And give you Troy's imperial town to take;
So, by their happy conduct, may you come
With conquest back to your sweet native home;

* [A "fourteener."—ED.]

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As you receive the ransom which I bring,
Respecting Jove, and the far-shooting king,
And break my daughter's bonds, at my desire,
And glad with her return her grieving sire."
With shouts of loud acclaim the Greeks decree
To take the gifts, to set the damsel free.
The king of men alone with fury burned,
And haughty, these opprobrious words returned:—
"Hence, holy dotard! and avoid my sight,
Ere evil intercept thy tardy flight;
Nor dare to tread this interdicted strand,
Lest not that idle sceptre in thy hand,
Nor thy god's crown, my vowed revenge withstand.
Hence, on thy life! the captive maid is mine,
Whom not for price or prayers I will resign;
Mine she shall be, till creeping age and time
Her bloom have withered, and consumed her prime.
Till then my royal bed she shall attend,
And, having first adorned it, late ascend;
This, for the night; by day, the web and loom,
And homely household-task, shall be her doom,
Far from thy loved embrace, and her sweet native home."
He said: the helpless priest replied no more,
But sped his steps along the hoarse-resounding shore.
Silent he fled; secure at length he stood,
Devoutly cursed his foes, and thus invoked his God:—
"O source of sacred light, attend my prayer,
God with the silver bow, and golden hair,
Whom Chrysa, Cilla, Tenedos obeys,
And whose broad eye their happy soil surveys!

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If, Smintheus, I have poured before thy shrine
The blood of oxen, goats, and ruddy wine,
And larded thighs on loaded altars laid,
Hear, and my just revenge propitious aid!
Pierce the proud Greeks, and with thy shafts attest
How much thy power is injured in thy priest."
He prayed; and Phœbus, hearing, urged his flight,
With fury kindled, from Olympus' height;
His quiver o'er his ample shoulders threw,
His bow twanged, and his arrows rattled as they flew.
Black as a stormy night, he ranged around
The tents, and compassed the devoted ground;
Then with full force his deadly bow he bent,
And feathered fates among the mules and sumpters sent,
The essay of rage; on faithful dogs the next;
And last, in human hearts his arrows fixed.
The God nine days the Greeks at rovers killed,
Nine days the camp with funeral fires was filled;
The tenth, Achilles, by the queen's command,
Who bears heaven's awful sceptre in her hand,
A council summoned; for the goddess grieved
Her favoured host should perish unrelieved.
The kings, assembled, soon their chief inclose;
Then from his seat the goddess-born arose,
And thus undaunted spoke:—"What now remains,
But that once more we tempt the watery plains,
And, wandering homeward, seek our safety hence,
In flight at least, if we can find defence?
Such woes at once encompass us about,
The plague within the camp, the sword without.

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Consult, O king, the prophets of the event;
And whence these ills, and what the God's intent,
Let them by dreams explore, for dreams from Jove are sent.
What want of offered victims, what offence
In fact committed could the Sun incense,
To deal his deadly shafts? What may remove
His settled hate, and reconcile his love?
That he may look propitious on our toils,
And hungry graves no more be glutted with our spoils."
Thus to the king of men the hero spoke,
Then Calchas the desired occasion took;
Calchas, the sacred seer, who had in view
Things present and the past, and things to come foreknew;
Supreme of augurs, who, by Phœbus taught,
The Grecian powers to Troy's destruction brought.
Skilled in the secret causes of their woes,
The reverend priest in graceful act arose,
And thus bespoke Pelides:—"Care of Jove,
Favoured of all the immortal powers above,
Wouldst thou the seeds deep sown of mischief know,
And why, provoked, Apollo bends his bow,
Plight first thy faith, inviolably true,
To save me from those ills that may ensue.
For I shall tell ungrateful truths to those,
Whose boundless powers of life and death dispose;
And sovereigns, ever jealous of their state,
Forgive not those whom once they mark for hate:
Even though the offence they seemingly digest,
Revenge, like embers raked within their breast,

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Bursts forth in flames, whose unresisted power
Will seize the unwary wretch, and soon devour.
Such, and no less, is he, on whom depends
The sum of things, and whom my tongue of force offends.
Secure me then from his foreseen intent,
That what his wrath may doom, thy valour may prevent."
To this the stern Achilles made reply:—
"Be bold, (and on my plighted faith rely,)
To speak what Phœbus has inspired thy soul
For common good, and speak without control.
His godhead I invoke; by him I swear,
That while my nostrils draw this vital air,
None shall presume to violate those bands,
Or touch thy person with unhallowed hands;
Even not the king of men, that all commands."
At this, resuming heart, the prophet said:—
"Nor hecatomb unslain, nor vows unpaid,
On Greeks accursed this dire contagion bring,
Or call for vengeance from the bowyer king;
But he the tyrant, whom none dares resist,
Affronts the godhead in his injured priest;
He keeps the damsel captive in his chain,
And presents are refused, and prayers preferred in vain.
For this the avenging power employs his darts,
And empties all his quiver in our hearts;
Thus will persist, relentless in his ire,
Till the fair slave be rendered to her sire,
And ransom-free restored to his abode,
With sacrifice to reconcile the God;
Then he, perhaps, atoned by prayer, may cease
His vengeance justly vowed, and give the peace."

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Thus having said, he sate:—Thus answered then,
Upstarting from his throne, the king of men,
His breast with fury filled, his eyes with fire,
Which rolling round, he shot in sparkles on the sire:
"Augur of ill, whose tongue was never found
Without a priestly curse, or boding sound!
For not one blessed event foretold to me
Passed through that mouth, or passed unwillingly;
And now thou dost with lies the throne invade,
By practice hardened in thy slandering trade;
Obtending heaven, for whate'er ills befall,
And sputtering under specious names thy gall.
Now Phœbus is provoked, his rites and laws
Are in his priest profaned, and I the cause;
Since I detain a slave, my sovereign prize,
And sacred gold, your idol-god, despise.
I love her well; and well her merits claim,
To stand preferred before my Grecian dame:
Not Clytemnestra's self in beauty's bloom
More charmed, or better plied the various loom:
Mine is the maid, and brought in happy hour,
With every household-grace adorned, to bless my nuptial bower.
Yet shall she be restored, since public good
For private interest ought not to be withstood,
To save the effusion of my people's blood.
But right requires, if I resign my own,
I should not suffer for your sakes alone;
Alone excluded from the prize I gained,
And by your common suffrage have obtained.
The slave without a ransom shall be sent,
It rests for you to make the equivalent."
To this the fierce Thessalian prince replied:—
"O first in power, but passing all in pride,

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Griping, and still tenacious of thy hold,
Wouldst thou the Grecian chiefs, though largely souled,
Should give the prizes they had gained before,
And with their loss thy sacrilege restore?
Whate'er by force of arms the soldier got,
Is each his own, by dividend of lot;
Which to resume were both unjust and base,
Not to be borne but by a servile race.
But this we can; if Saturn's son bestows
The sack of Troy, which he by promise owes,
Then shall the conquering Greeks thy loss restore,
And with large interest make the advantage more."
To this Atrides answered:—"Though thy boast
Assumes the foremost name of all our host,
Pretend not, mighty man, that what is mine,
Controlled by thee, I tamely should resign.
Shall I release the prize I gained by right,
In taken towns, and many a bloody fight,
While thou detain'st Briseis in thy bands,
By priestly glossing on the God's commands?
Resolve on this, (a short alternative,)
Quit mine, or, in exchange, another give;
Else I, assure thy soul, by sovereign right
Will seize thy captive in thy own despite;
Or from stout Ajax, or Ulysses, bear
What other prize my fancy shall prefer:
Then softly murmur, or aloud complain,
Rage as you please, you shall resist in vain.
But more of this, in proper time and place;
To things of greater moment let us pass.
A ship to sail the sacred seas prepare,
Proud in her trim, and put on board the fair,
With sacrifice and gifts, and all the pomp of prayer.

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The crew well chosen, the command shall be
In Ajax; or if other I decree,
In Creta's king, or Ithacus, or, if I please, in thee:
Most fit thyself to see performed the intent,
For which my prisoner from my sight is sent,
(Thanks to thy pious care,) that Phœbus may relent."
At this Achilles rolled his furious eyes,
Fixed on the king askant, and thus replies:—
"O, impudent, regardful of thy own,
Whose thoughts are centred on thyself alone,
Advanced to sovereign sway for better ends
Than thus like abject slaves to treat thy friends!
What Greek is he, that, urged by command,
Against the Trojan troops will lift his hand?
Not I; nor such enforced respect I owe,
Nor Pergamus I hate, nor Priam is my foe.
What wrong from Troy remote could I sustain,
To leave my fruitful soil and happy reign,
And plough the surges of the stormy main?
Thee, frontless man, we followed from afar,
Thy instruments of death, and tools of war.
Thine is the triumph; ours the toil alone;
We bear thee on our backs, and mount thee on the throne.
For thee we fall in fight; for thee redress
Thy baffled* brother,—not the wrongs of Greece.
And now thou threaten'st, with unjust decree,
To punish thy affronting heaven on me;
To seize the prize which I so dearly bought,
By common suffrage given, confirmed by lot.
Mean match to thine; for, still above the rest,
Thy hooked rapacious hands usurp the best;

* Baffled is here used for insulted. [It is the elder and proper sense.—Ed.]

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Though mine are first in fight, to force the prey,
And last sustain the labours of the day.
Nor grudge I thee the much the Grecians give,
Nor murmuring take the little I receive;
Yet even this little, thou, who wouldst ingross
The whole, insatiate, enviest as thy loss.
Know, then, for Phthia fixed is my return;
Better at home my ill-paid pains to mourn,
Than from an equal here sustain the public scorn."
The king, whose brows with shining gold were bound,
Who saw his throne with sceptred slaves encompassed round,
Thus answered stern:—"Go, at thy pleasure, go;
We need not such a friend, nor fear we such a foe.
There will not want to follow me in fight;
Jove will assist, and Jove assert my right:
But thou of all the kings (his care below)
Art least at my command, and most my foe.
Debates, dissensions, uproars are thy joy;
Provoked without offence, and practised to destroy.
Strength is of brutes, and not thy boast alone;
At least 'tis lent from heaven, and not thy own.
Fly then, ill-mannered, to thy native land,
And there thy ant-born Myrmidons command.
But mark this menace; since I must resign
My black-eyed maid, to please the Powers divine;
A well-rigged vessel in the port attends,
Manned at my charge, commanded by my friends;
The ship shall waft her to her wished abode,
Full fraught with holy bribes to the far-shooting God.
This thus despatched, I owe myself the care,
My fame and injured honour to repair;

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From thy own tent, proud man, in thy despite,
This hand shall ravish thy pretended right.
Briseis shall be mine, and thou shalt see
What odds of awful power I have on thee,
That others at thy cost may learn the difference
of degree."
At this the impatient hero sourly smiled;
His heart impetuous in his bosom boiled,
And, jostled by two tides of equal sway,
Stood for a while suspended in his way.
Betwixt his reason and his rage untamed,
One whispered soft, and one aloud reclaimed;
That only counselled to the safer side,
This to the sword his ready hand applied.
Unpunished to support the affront was hard,
Nor easy was the attempt to force the guard;
But soon the thirst of vengeance fired his blood,
Half shone his falchion, and half sheathed it
stood.
In that nice moment, Pallas, from above,
Commissioned by the imperial wife of Jove,
Descended swift; (the white-armed Queen was
loath
The fight should follow, for she favoured both;)
Just as in act he stood, in clouds enshrined,
Her hand she fastened on his hair behind;
Then backward by his yellow curls she drew;
To him, and him alone, confessed in view.
Tamed by superior force, he turned his eyes,
Aghast at first, and stupid with surprise;
But by her sparkling eyes, and ardent look,
The virgin-warrior known, he thus bespoke:—
"Com'st thou, Celestial, to behold my wrongs?
To view the vengeance which to crimes belongs?"
Thus he.—The blue-eyed Goddess thus re-
joined:—
"I come to calm thy turbulence of mind,

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If reason will resume her sovereign sway,
And, sent by Juno, her commands obey.
Equal she loves you both, and I protect;
Then give thy guardian Gods their due respect,
And cease contention; be thy words severe,
Sharp as he merits; but the sword forbear.
An hour unhoped already wings her way,
When he his dire affront shall dearly pay;
When the proud king shall sue, with treble gain,
To quit thy loss, and conquer thy disdain.
But thou, secure of my unfailing word,
Compose thy swelling soul, and sheathe the sword."
The youth thus answered mild:—"Auspicious maid,
Heaven's will be mine, and your commands obeyed.
The Gods are just, and when, subduing sense,
We serve their Powers, provide the recompense."
He said; with surly faith believed her word,
And in the sheath, reluctant, plunged the sword.
Her message done, she mounts the blessed abodes,
And mixed among the senate of the Gods.
At her departure his disdain returned;
The fire she fanned with greater fury burned,
Rumbling within till thus it found a vent:—
"Dastard and drunkard, mean and insolent!
Tongue-valiant hero, vaunter of thy might,
In threats the foremost, but the lag in fight!
When didst thou thrust amid the mingled preace,
Content to bide the war aloof in peace?
Arms are the trade of each plebeian soul;
'Tis death to fight, but kingly to control;
Lord-like at ease, with arbitrary power,
To peel the chiefs, the people to devour.

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These, traitor, are thy talents; safer far
Than to contend in fields, and toils of war.
Nor couldst thou thus have dared the common hate,
Were not their souls as abject as their state.
But, by this sceptre solemnly I swear,
(Which never more green leaf or growing branch shall bear;
Torn from the tree, and given by Jove to those
Who laws dispense, and mighty wrongs oppose,)
That when the Grecians want my wonted aid,
No gift shall bribe it, and no prayer persuade.
When Hector comes, the homicide, to wield
His conquering arms, with corpse to strew the field,
Then shalt thou mourn thy pride, and late confess
My wrong, repented when 'tis past redress."
He said; and with disdain, in open view,
Against the ground his golden sceptre threw,
Then sate; with boiling rage Atrides burned,
And foam betwixt his gnashing grinders churned.
But from his seat the Pylian prince arose,
With reasoning mild, their madness to compose;
Words, sweet as honey, from his mouth distilled;
Two centuries already he fulfilled,
And now began the third; unbroken yet,
Once famed for courage, still in council great.
"What worse," he said, "can Argos undergo,
What can more gratify the Phrygian foe,
Than these distempered heats, if both the lights
Of Greece their private interest disunites?
Believe a friend, with thrice your years increased,
And let these youthful passions be repressed.
I flourished long before your birth; and then
Lived equal with a race of braver men,
Than these dim eyes shall e'er behold again.

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Ceneus and Dryas, and, excelling them,
Great Theseus, and the force of greater Polypheme.
With these I went, a brother of the war,
Their dangers to divide, their fame to share;
Nor idle stood with unassisting hands,
When savage beasts, and men's more savage bands,
Their virtuous toil subdued: yet those I swayed,
With powerful speech; I spoke, and they obeyed.
If such as those my counsels could reclaim,
Think not, young warriors, your diminished name
Shall lose of lustre, by subjecting rage
To the cool dictates of experienced age.
Thou, king of men, stretch not thy sovereign sway
Beyond the bounds free subjects can obey;
But let Pelides in his prize rejoice,
Achieved in arms, allowed by public voice.
Nor thou, brave champion, with his power contend,
Before whose throne even kings their lowered sceptres bend;
The head of action he, and thou the hand,
Matchless thy force, but mightier his command.
Thou first, O king, release the rights of sway;
Power, self-restrained, the people best obey.
Sanctions of law from thee derive their source;
Command thyself, whom no commands can force.
The son of Thetis, rampire * of our host,
Is worth our care to keep, nor shall my prayers be lost."
Thus Nestor said, and ceased.—Atrides broke
His silence next, but pondered ere he spoke:—

[* =rampart.—Ed.]

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"Wise are thy words, and glad I would obey,
But this proud man affects imperial sway,
Controlling kings, and trampling on our state;
His will is law, and what he wills is fate.
The Gods have given him strength; but whence the style
Of lawless power assumed, or licence to revile?"
Achilles cut him short, and thus replied:—
"My worth, allowed in words, is, in effect, denied;
For who but a poltroon, possessed with fear,
Such haughty insolence can tamely bear?
Command thy slaves; my freeborn soul disdains
A tyrant's curb, and, restiff, breaks the reins.
Take this along, that no dispute shall rise
(Though mine the woman) for my ravished prize;
But, she excepted, as unworthy strife,
Dare not, I charge thee dare not, on thy life,
Touch aught of mine beside, by lot my due,
But stand aloof, and think profane to view;
This falchion else, not hitherto withstood,
These hostile fields shall fatten with thy blood."
He said, and rose the first; the council broke,
And all their grave consults dissolved in smoke,
The royal youth retired, on vengeance bent;
Patroclus followed silent to his tent.
Meantime, the king with gifts a vessel stores,
Supplies the banks with twenty chosen oars;
And next, to reconcile the shooter God,
Within her hollow sides the sacrifice he stowed;
Chryseis last was set on board, whose hand
Ulysses took, intrusted with command;
They plough the liquid seas, and leave the lessening land.
Atrides then, his outward zeal to boast,
Bade purify the sin-polluted host.
With perfect hecatombs the God they graced,
Whose offered entrails in the main were cast;

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Black bulls and bearded goats on altars lie,
And clouds of savoury stench involve the sky.
These pomps the royal hypocrite designed
For show, but harboured vengeance in his mind;
Till holy malice, longing for a vent,
At length discovered his concealed intent.
Talthybius, and Eurybates the just,
Heralds of arms, and ministers of trust,
He called, and thus bespoke:—"Haste hence your way,
And from the Goddess-born demand his prey.
If yielded, bring the captive; if denied,
The king (so tell him) shall chastise his pride,
And with armed multitudes in person come
To vindicate his power, and justify his doom."
This hard command unwilling they obey,
And o'er the barren shore pursue their way,
Where quartered in their camp the fierce Thessalians lay.
Their sovereign seated on his chair they find,
His pensive cheek upon his hand reclined,
And anxious thoughts revolving in his mind.
With gloomy looks he saw them entering in
Without salute; nor durst they first begin,
Fearful of rash offence and death foreseen.
He soon, the cause divining, cleared his brow,
And thus did liberty of speech allow:—
"Interpreters of Gods and men, be bold;
Awful your character, and uncontrolled:
Howe'er unpleasing be the news you bring,
I blame not you, but your imperious king.
You come, I know, my captive to demand;
Patroclus, give her to the herald's hand,
But you authentic witnesses I bring
Before the Gods, and your ungrateful king,
Of this my manifest, that never more
This hand shall combat on the crooked shore:

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No; let the Grecian powers, oppressed in fight,
Unpitied perish in their tyrant's sight.
Blind of the future, and by rage misled,
He pulls his crimes upon his people's head;
Forced from the field in trenches to contend,
And his insulted camp from foes defend."
He said, and soon, obeying his intent,
Patroclus brought Briseis from her tent,
Then to the intrusted messengers resigned:
She wept, and often cast her eyes behind.
Forced from the man she loved, they led her thence,
Along the shore, a prisoner to their prince.
Sole on the barren sands the suffering chief
Roared out for anguish, and indulged his grief;
Cast on his kindred seas a stormy look,
And his upbraided mother thus bespoke:—
"Unhappy parent of a short-lived son,—
Since Jove in pity by thy prayers was won
To grace my small remains of breath with fame,
Why loads he this embittered life with shame,
Suffering his king of men to force my slave,
Whom, well deserved in war, the Grecians gave?"
Set by old Ocean's side the Goddess heard,
Then from the sacred deep her head she reared;
Rose like a morning mist, and thus begun
To soothe the sorrows of her plaintive son:—
"Why cries my care, and why conceals his smart?
Let thy afflicted parent share her part."
Then, sighing from the bottom of his breast,
To the Sea-Goddess thus the Goddess-born addressed:—
"Thou know'st my pain, which telling but recalls;
By force of arms we rased the Theban walls;
The ransacked city, taken by our toils,
We left, and hither brought the golden spoils:

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Equal we shared them; but before the rest,
The proud prerogative had seized the best.
Chryseis was the greedy tyrant's prize,
Chryseis, rosy-cheeked, with charming eyes.
Her sire, Apollo's priest, arrived to buy,
With proffered gifts of price, his daughter's liberty.
Suppliant before the Grecian chiefs he stood,
Awful, and armed with ensigns of his God;
Bare was his hoary head; one holy hand
Held forth his laurel crown, and one his sceptre of command.
His suit was common, but, above the rest,
To both the brother-princes was addressed.
With shouts of loud acclaim the Greeks agree
To take the gifts, to set the prisoner free.
Not so the tyrant, who with scorn the priest
Received, and with opprobrious words dismissed.
The good old man, forlorn of human aid,
For vengeance to his heavenly patron prayed:
The Godhead gave a favourable ear,
And granted all to him he held so dear;
In an ill hour his piercing shafts he sped,
And heaps on heaps of slaughtered Greeks lay dead,
While round the camp he ranged: at length arose
A seer, who well divined, and durst disclose
The source of all our ills: I took the word;
And urged the sacred slave to be restored,
The God appeased: the swelling monarch stormed,
And then the vengeance vowed he since performed.
The Greeks, 'tis true, their ruin to prevent,
Have to the royal priest his daughter sent;

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But from their haughty king his heralds came,
And seized, by his command, my captive dame,
By common suffrage given;—but thou be won,
If in thy power, to avenge thy injured son!
Ascend the skies, and supplicating move
Thy just complaint to cloud-compelling Jove.
If thou by either word or deed hast wrought
A kind remembrance in his grateful thought,
Urge him by that; for often hast thou said
Thy power was once not useless in his aid,
When he, who high above the highest reigns,
Surprised by traitor Gods, was bound in chains;
When Juno, Pallas, with ambition fired,
And his blue brother of the seas conspired,
Thou freed'st the sovereign from unworthy bands,
Thou brought'st Briareus with his hundred hands,
(So called in heaven, but mortal men below
By his terrestrial name, Ægeon, know;
Twice stronger than his sire, who sate above
Assessor to the throne of thundering Jove.)
The gods, dismayed at his approach, withdrew,
Nor durst their unaccomplished crime pursue.
That action to his grateful mind recall,
Embrace his knees, and at his footstool fall;
That now, if ever, he will aid our foes;
Let Troy's triumphant troops the camp inclose;
Ours, beaten to the shore, the siege forsake,
And what their king deserves, with him partake;
That the proud tyrant, at his proper cost,
May learn the value of the man he lost."
To whom the Mother-goddess thus replied,
Sighed ere she spoke, and while she spoke she cried:
"Ah, wretched me! by fates averse decreed
To bring thee forth with pain, with care to breed!
Did envious heaven not otherwise ordain,
Safe in thy hollow ships thou shouldst remain,
Nor ever tempt the fatal field again;

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But now thy planet sheds his poisonous rays,
And short and full of sorrow are thy days.
For what remains, to heaven I will ascend,
And at the Thunderer's throne thy suit commend.
Till then, secure in ships, abstain from fight;
Indulge thy grief in tears, and vent thy spite.
For yesterday the court of heaven with Jove
Removed; 'tis dead vacation now above.
Twelve days the Gods their solemn revels keep,
And quaff with blameless Ethiops in the deep.
Returned from thence, to heaven my flight I take,
Knock at the brazen gates, and Providence awake;
Embrace his knees, and suppliant to the sire,
Doubt not I will obtain the grant of thy desire."
She said, and, parting, left him on the place,
Swoln with disdain, resenting his disgrace;
Revengeful thoughts revolving in his mind,
He wept for anger, and for love he pined.
Meantime, with prosperous gales Ulysses brought
The slave, and ship, with sacrifices fraught,
To Chrysa's port; where, entering with the tide,
He dropped his anchors, and his oars he plied,
Furled every sail, and, drawing down the mast,
His vessel moored, and made with hawsers fast.
Descending on the plain, ashore they bring
The hecatomb, to please the shooter king.
The dame before an altar's holy fire
Ulysses led, and thus bespoke her sire:—
"Reverenced be thou, and be thy God adored!
The king of men thy daughter has restored,
And sent by me with presents and with prayer.
He recommends him to thy pious care,

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That Phœbus at thy suit his wrath may cease,
And give the penitent offenders peace."
He said, and gave her to her father's hands,
Who glad received her, free from servile bands.
This done, in order they, with sober grace,
Their gifts around the well-built altar place.
Then washed, and took the cakes, while Chryses stood
With hands upheld, and thus invoked his God :—
"God of the silver bow, whose eyes survey
The sacred Cilla! thou, whose awful sway
Chrysa the blessed, and Tenedos obey!
Now hear, as thou before my prayer hast heard,
Against the Grecians, and their prince, preferred.
Once thou hast honoured, honour once again
Thy priest, nor let his second vows be vain;
But from the afflicted host and humble prince
Avert thy wrath, and cease thy pestilence!"
Apollo heard, and, conquering his disdain,
Unbent his bow, and Greece respired again.
Now when the solemn rites of prayer were past,
Their salted cakes on crackling flames they cast;
Then, turning back, the sacrifice they sped,
The fatted oxen slew, and flayed the dead;
Chopped off their nervous thighs, and next prepared
To involve the lean in cauls, and mend with lard.
Sweetbreads and collops were with skewers pricked
About the sides, imbibing* what they decked.
The priest with holy hands was seen to tine† ·
The cloven wood, and pour the ruddy wine.

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* [Imbibing=not "drawing flavour from," but "giving it to;" a sense now obsolete.—Ed.]

† [Also "tind," to kindle; *cf.* "tinder."—Ed.]

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The youth approached the fire, and, as it burned,
On five sharp broachers * ranked, the roast they turned;
These morsels stayed their stomachs, then the rest
They cut in legs and fillets for the feast;
Which drawn and served, their hunger they appease
With savoury meat, and set their minds at ease.
Now when the rage of eating was repelled,
The boys with generous wine the goblets filled:
The first libations to the gods they pour,
And then with songs indulge the genial hour.
Holy debauch! till day to night they bring,
With hymns and pæans to the bowyer king.
At sunset to their ships they make return,
And snore secure on decks till rosy morn.
The skies with dawning day were purpled o'er;
Awaked, with labouring oars they leave the shore;
The Power appeased, with wind sufficed the sail,
The bellying canvas strutted with the gale;
The waves indignant roar with surly pride,
And press against the sides, and, beaten off, divide.
They cut the foamy way, with force impelled
Superior, till the Trojan port they held;
Then, hauling on the strand, their galley moor,
And pitch their tents along the crooked shore.
Meantime the goddess-born in secret pined,
Nor visited the camp, nor in the council joined;
But, keeping close, his gnawing heart he fed
With hopes of vengeance on the tyrant's head;
And wished for bloody wars and mortal wounds,
And of the Greeks oppressed in fight to hear the dying sounds.

* [The same as "broach," *i.e.* "spit."—Ed.]

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Now when twelve days complete had run their race,
The gods bethought them of the cares belonging to their place.
Jove at their head ascending from the sea,
A shoal of puny Powers attend his way.
Then Thetis, not unmindful of her son,
Emerging from the deep to beg her boon,
Pursued their track, and wakened from his rest,
Before the sovereign stood, a morning guest.
Him in the circle, but apart, she found;
The rest at awful distance stood around.
She bowed, and, ere she durst her suit begin,
One hand embraced his knees, one propped his chin;
Then thus:—"If I, celestial sire, in aught
Have served thy will, or gratified thy thought,
One glimpse of glory to my issue give,
Graced for the little time he has to live!
Dishonoured by the king of men he stands;
His rightful prize is ravished from his hands.
But thou, O father, in my son's defence,
Assume thy power, assert thy providence.
Let Troy prevail, till Greece the affront has paid
With doubled honours, and redeemed his aid."
She ceased; but the considering God was mute,
Till she, resolved to win, renewed her suit,
Nor loosed her hold, but forced him to reply:—
"Or grant me my petition, or deny;
Jove cannot fear; then tell me to my face
That I, of all the gods, am least in grace.
This I can bear." The cloud-compeller mourned,
And, sighing first, this answer he returned:—
"Know'st thou what clamours will disturb my reign,
What my stunned ears from Juno must sustain?

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In council she gives licence to her tongue,
Loquacious, brawling, ever in the wrong;
And now she will my partial power upbraid,
If, alienate from Greece, I give the Trojans aid.
But thou depart, and shun her jealous sight,
The care be mine to do Pelides right.
Go then, and on the faith of Jove rely,
When, nodding to thy suit, he bows the sky.
This ratifies the irrevocable doom;
The sign ordained, that what I will shall come;
The stamp of heaven, and seal of fate." He said,
And shook the sacred honours of his head:
With terror trembled heaven's subsiding hill,
And from his shaken curls ambrosial dews distil.
The Goddess goes exulting from his sight,
And seeks the seas profound, and leaves the realms of light.
He moves into his hall; the Powers resort,
Each from his house, to fill the sovereign's court;
Nor waiting summons, nor expecting stood,
But met with reverence, and received the God.
He mounts the throne; and Juno took her place,
But sullen discontent sate lowering on her face.
With jealous eyes, at distance she had seen,
Whispering with Jove, the silver-footed queen;
Then, impotent of tongue, her silence broke,
Thus turbulent, in rattling tone, she spoke:—
"Author of ills, and close contriver Jove,
Which of thy dames, what prostitute of love,
Has held thy ear so long, and begged so hard,
For some old service done, some new reward?
Apart you talked, for that 's your special care;
The consort never must the council share.
One gracious word is for a wife too much;
Such is a marriage vow, and Jove's own faith is such."

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Then thus the sire of Gods, and men below:—
"What I have hidden, hope not thou to know.
Even goddesses are women; and no wife
Has power to regulate her husband's life.
Counsel she may; and I will give thy ear
The knowledge first of what is fit to hear.
What I transact with others, or alone,
Beware to learn, nor press too near the throne."
To whom the Goddess, with the charming eyes:—
"What hast thou said, O tyrant of the skies!
When did I search the secrets of thy reign,
Though privileged to know, but privileged in vain?
But well thou dost, to hide from common sight
Thy close intrigues, too bad to bear the light.
Nor doubt I, but the silver-footed dame,
Tripping from sea, on such an errand came,
To grace her issue at the Grecians' cost,
And, for one peevish man, destroy an host."
To whom the Thunderer made this stern reply:—
"My household curse! my lawful plague! the spy
Of Jove's designs! his other squinting eye!
Why this vain prying, and for what avail?
Jove will be master still, and Juno fail.
Should thy suspicious thoughts divine aright,
Thou but becom'st more odious to my sight
For this attempt; uneasy life to me,
Still watched and importuned, but worse for thee.
Curb that impetuous tongue, before too late
The Gods behold, and tremble at thy fate;
Pitying, but daring not, in thy defence,
To lift a hand against Omnipotence."

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This heard, the imperious queen sate mute with fear,
Nor further durst incense the gloomy Thunderer:
Silence was in the court at this rebuke;
Nor could the Gods abashed sustain their sovereign's look.
The limping Smith observed the saddened feast,
And, hopping here and there, himself a jest,
Put in his word, that neither might offend,
To Jove obsequious, yet his mother's friend.
"What end in heaven will be of civil war,
If Gods of pleasure will for mortals jar?
Such discord but disturbs our jovial feast;
One grain of bad embitters all the best.
Mother, though wise yourself, my counsel weigh;
'Tis much unsafe my sire to disobey;
Not only you provoke him to your cost,
But mirth is marred, and the good cheer is lost.
Tempt not his heavy hand, for he has power
To throw you headlong from his heavenly tower;
But one submissive word, which you let fall,
Will make him in good humour with us all."
He said no more, but crowned a bowl unbid,
The laughing nectar overlooked the lid;
Then put it to her hand, and thus pursued:—
"This cursed quarrel be no more renewed:
Be, as becomes a wife, obedient still;
Though grieved, yet subject to her husband's will.
I would not see you beaten; yet afraid
Of Jove's superior force, I dare not aid.
Too well I know him, since that hapless hour
When I, and all the Gods, employed our power
To break your bonds; me by the heel he drew,
And o'er heaven's battlements with fury threw.

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All day I fell; my flight at morn begun,
And ended not but with the setting sun.
Pitched on my head, at length the Lemnian ground
Received my battered skull, the Sinthians healed my wound."
At Vulcan's homely mirth his mother smiled,
And, smiling, took the cup the clown had filled.
The reconciler-bowl went round the board,
Which, emptied, the rude skinker * still restored.
Loud fits of laughter seized the guests, to see
The limping God so deft at his new ministry.
The feast continued till declining light;
They drank, they laughed, they loved, and then 'twas night.
Nor wanted tuneful harp, nor vocal quire,
The Muses sung, Apollo touched the lyre.
Drunken at last, and drowsy, they depart
Each to his house, adorned with laboured art
Of the lame architect. The thundering God,
Even he, withdrew to rest, and had his load;
His swimming head to needful sleep applied,
And Juno lay unheeded by his side.

* [Tapster.—Ed.]

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THE LAST PARTING

OF

HECTOR AND ANDROMACHE.

FROM

THE SIXTH BOOK OF THE ILIAD.

THE ARGUMENT.

Hector returning from the field of battle, to visit Helen, his sister-in-law, and his brother Paris, who had fought unsuccessfully, hand to hand with Menelaus, from thence goes to his own palace to see his wife Andromache, and his infant son Astyanax. The description of that interview is the subject of this translation.

THUS having said, brave Hector went to see
His virtuous wife, the fair Andromache.
He found her not at home; for she was gone,
Attended by her maid and infant son,
To climb the steepy tower of Ilion;
From whence, with heavy heart, she might survey
The bloody business of the dreadful day.
Her mournful eyes she cast around the plain,
And sought the lord of her desires in vain.

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But he, who thought his peopled palace bare,
When she, his only comfort, was not there,
Stood in the gate, and asked of every one,
Which way she took, and whither she was gone;
If to the court, or with his mother's train,
In long procession to Minerva's fane?
The servants answered,—Neither to the court,
Where Priam's sons and daughters did resort;
Nor to the temple was she gone, to move
With prayers the blue-eyed progeny of Jove;
But more solicitous for him alone,
Than all their safety, to the tower was gone,
There to survey the labours of the field,
Where the Greeks conquer, and the Trojans yield;
Swiftly she passed, with fear and fury wild;
The nurse went lagging after with the child.
This heard, the noble Hector made no stay,
The admiring throng divide to give him way;
He passed through every street, by which he came,
And at the gate he met the mournful dame.
His wife beheld him; and, with eager pace,
Flew to his arms, to meet a dear embrace.
His wife, who brought in dower Cilicia's crown,
And in herself a greater dower alone;
Ætion's heir, who, on the woody plain
Of Hippoplacus, did in Thebé reign.
Breathless she flew, with joy and passion wild;
The nurse came lagging after with her child.
The royal babe upon her breast was laid,
Who, like the morning star, his beams displayed.
Scamandrius was his name, which Hector gave,
From that fair flood which Ilion's wall did lave;
But him Astyanax the Trojans call,
From his great father who defends the wall.
Hector beheld him with a silent smile,
His tender wife stood weeping by the while;

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Pressed in her own, his warlike hand she took,
Then sighed, and thus prophetically spoke :—
"Thy dauntless heart, which I foresee too late,
Too daring man, will urge thee to thy fate.
Nor dost thou pity, with a parent's mind,
This helpless orphan, whom thou leav'st behind;
Nor me, the unhappy partner of thy bed,
Who must in triumph by the Greeks be led.
They seek thy life; and, in unequal fight
With many, will oppress thy single might.
Better it were for miserable me
To die, before the fate which I foresee;
For, ah! what comfort can the world bequeath
To Hector's widow, after Hector's death!
Eternal sorrow and perpetual tears
Began my youth, and will conclude my years;
I have no parents, friends, nor brothers left,
By stern Achilles all of life bereft.
Then, when the walls of Thebes he overthrew,
His fatal hand my royal father slew;
He slew Ætion, but despoiled him not,
Nor in his hate the funeral rites forgot;
Armed as he was he sent him whole below,
And reverenced thus the manes of his foe.
A tomb he raised; the mountain-nymphs around
Inclosed, with planted elms, the holy ground.
My seven brave brothers, in one fatal day,
To death's dark mansions took the mournful way;
Slain by the same Achilles, while they keep
The bellowing oxen, and the bleating sheep.
My mother, who the royal sceptre swayed,
Was captive to the cruel victor made,
And hither led; but, hence redeemed with gold,
Her native country did again behold,
And but beheld; for soon Diana's dart,
In an unhappy chase, transfixed her heart.

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"But thou, my Hector, art thyself alone
My parents, brothers, and my lord, in one.
O kill not all my kindred o'er again,
Nor tempt the dangers of the dusty plain,
But in this tower, for our defence, remain.
Thy wife and son are in thy ruin lost;
This is a husband's and a father's post.
The Scæan gate commands the plains below;
Here marshal all thy soldiers as they go;
And hence, with other hands, repel the foe.
By yon wild fig-tree lies their chief ascent,
And thither all their powers are daily bent.
The two Ajaces have I often seen,
And the wronged husband of the Spartan queen;
With him his greater brother; and, with these,
Fierce Diomede, and bold Meriones;
Uncertain if by augury, or chance,
But by this easy rise they all advance;
Guard well that pass, secure of all beside."
To whom the noble Hector thus replied:—
"That and the rest are in my daily care;
But, should I shun the dangers of the war,
With scorn the Trojans would reward my pains,
And their proud ladies, with their sweeping trains;
The Grecian swords and lances I can bear,
But loss of honour is my only fear.
Shall Hector, born to war, his birthright yield,
Belie his courage, and forsake the field?
Early in rugged arms I took delight,
And still have been the foremost in the fight;
With dangers dearly have I bought renown,
And am the champion of my father's crown.
And yet my mind forebodes, with sure presage,
That Troy shall perish by the Grecian rage:
The fatal day draws on, when I must fall,
And universal ruin cover all.

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Not Troy itself, though built by hands divine,
Nor Priam, nor his people, nor his line,
My mother, nor my brothers of renown,
Whose valour yet defends the unhappy town,—
Not these, nor all their fates which I foresee,
Are half of that concern I have for thee.
I see, I see thee, in that fatal hour,
Subjected to the victor's cruel power;
Led hence a slave to some insulting sword,
Forlorn, and trembling at a foreign lord;
A spectacle in Argos, at the loom,
Gracing with Trojan fights, a Grecian room;
Or from deep wells the living stream to take,
And on thy weary shoulders bring it back.
While, groaning under this laborious life,
They insolently call thee Hector's wife;
Upbraid thy bondage with thy husband's name,
And from my glory propagate thy shame.
This when they say, thy sorrows will increase
With anxious thoughts of former happiness;
That he is dead who could thy wrongs redress.
But I, oppressed with iron sleep before,
Shall hear thy unavailing cries no more."
He said;
Then, holding forth his arms, he took his boy,
The pledge of love and other hope of Troy.
The fearful infant turned his head away,
And on his nurse's neck reclining lay,
His unknown father shunning with affright,
And looking back on so uncouth a sight;
Daunted to see a face with steel o'erspread,
And his high plume that nodded o'er his head.
His sire and mother smiled with silent joy,
And Hector hastened to relieve his boy;
Dismissed his burnished helm, that shone afar,
The pride of warriors, and the pomp of war;

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The illustrious babe, thus reconciled, he took,
Hugged in his arms, and kissed, and thus he spoke:—
"Parent of Gods and men, propitious Jove!
And you, bright synod of the powers above!
On this my son your gracious gifts bestow;
Grant him to live, and great in arms to grow,
To reign in Troy, to govern with renown,
To shield the people, and assert the crown;
That, when hereafter he from war shall come,
And bring his Trojans peace and triumph home,
Some aged man, who lives this act to see,
And who, in former times, remembered me,
May say, the son, in fortitude and fame,
Outgoes the mark, and drowns his father's name:
That, at these words, his mother may rejoice,
And add her suffrage to the public voice."
Thus having said;
He first, with suppliant hands, the Gods adored;
Then to the mother's arms the child restored.
With tears and smiles she took her son, and pressed
The illustrious infant to her fragrant breast.
He, wiping her fair eyes, indulged her grief,
And eased her sorrows with this last relief:—
"My wife and mistress, drive thy fears away,
Nor give so bad an omen to the day;
Think not it lies in any Grecian's power
To take my life, before the fatal hour.
When that arrives, nor good nor bad can fly
The irrevocable doom of destiny.
Return; and, to divert thy thoughts at home,
There task thy maids, and exercise the loom,
Employed in works that womanhood become.
The toils of war, and feats of chivalry
Belong to men; and, most of all, to me."

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At this, for new replies he did not stay,
But laced his crested helm, and strode away.
His lovely consort to her house returned,
And, looking often back, in silence mourned.
Home when she came, her secret woe she vents,
And fills the palace with her loud laments;
Those loud laments her echoing maids restore,
And Hector, yet alive, as dead deplore.

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